

VALENTINIAN: A TRAGEDY.

As 'tis Alter'd by the late
EARL of ROCHESTER,

And Acted at the

Theatre-Royal.

Together with a Preface concerning the Author
and his Writings.

By one of his Friends.



L O N D O N :

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VALLENTINIAN

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Division of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior

Prologue spoken by Mrs. Cook the first Day.

Written by Mrs. Behn.

Wish that assurance we to day address,
As standard Beauties, certain of Success.
With careless Pride at once they charm and vex,
And scorn the little Censures of their Sex.
Sure of the unregarded Spoil, despise
The needless Affectation of the Eyes,
The softening Languishment that faintly warms,
But trust alone to their resistless Charms.
So we secur'd by undisputed Wit,
Disdain the damning Malice of the Pit,
Nor need false Arts to set great Nature off,
Or studied Tricks to force the Clap and Laugh.
Ye Wou'd-be-Criticks, you are all undone,
For here's no Theam for you to work upon.
Faith seem to talk to Jenny, I advise,
Of who, likes who, and how Loves Markets rise.
Try these hard Times how to abate the Price;
Tell her how cheap were Damsels on the Ice.
Mongst City-Wives, and Daughters that came there,
How far a Guinny went at Blanket-Fair.
Thus you may find some good Excuse for sailing
Of your beloved Exercise of Railing.
That when Friend cries—How did the Play succeed?
Deme, I hardly minded—what they did.
We shall not your Ill-nature please to day,
With some fond Scriblers new uncertain Play,
Loose as vain Youth, and tedious as dull Age,
Or Love and Honour that o're-runs the Stage.
Fam'd and substantial Authors give this Treat,
And 'twill be solemn, Noble all and Great.
Wit, sacred Wit, is all the bus'ness here,
Great Fletcher, and the Greater Rochester.
Now name the hardy Man one fault dares find,
In the vast Work of two such Heroes join'd.

The Fair on the
Thames so called.

None but Great Strephon's soft and powerful *VV*it
Durst undertake to mend what Fletcher writ.
Different their heav'nly Notes ; yet both agree
To make an everlasting Harmony.
Listen ye Virgins to his charming Song,
Eternal Musick dwelt upon his Tongue.
The Gods of Love and *VV*it inspir'd his Pen,
And Love and Beauty was his glorious Theam.

Now Ladies you may celebrate his Name,
*VV*ithout a scandal on your spotless Fame.
*VV*ith Praise his dear lov'd Memory pursue,
And pay his Death, what to his Life was due.

Prologue to *VALENTINIAN*.

Spoken by Mrs. Cook the second Day.

TIS not your easiness to give Applause,
This long hid Jewel into publick draws
Our matchless Author, who to *VV*it gave Rules,
Scorns Praise, that has been prostitute to Fools.
To factious Favour, the sole Prop and Fence
Of Hackney-Scriblers, he quits all Pretence,
And for their Flatteries brings you Truth and Sence.
Things we our selves confess to be unfit
For such side-Boxes, and for such a Pit.
To the fair Sex some Complement were due,
Did they not slight themselves in liking you ;
How can they here for Judges be thought fit,
*VV*ho daily your soft Nonsense take for *VV*it ;
Do on your ill-bred Noise for Humour doat,
And choose the Man by the embroider'd Coat ?
Our Author lov'd the youthful and the fair,
But even in those their Follies could not spare ;
Bid them discreetly use their present store,
Be Friends to Pleasure, when they please no more ;

Desir'd the Ladies of maturer Ages,
 If some remaining Spark their Hearts enrages,
 At home to quench their Embers with their Pages.
 Pert, patch'd, and painted, there to spend their days;
 Not crowd the fronts of Boxes at new Plays:
 Advis'd young sighing Fools to be more pressing,
 And Fops of Forty to give over dressing.
 By this he got the Envy of the Age,
 No Fury's like a libell'd Blockhead's Rage.
 Hence some despis'd him for his want of Wit,
 And others said he too obscenely writ.
 Dull Niceness, envious of Mankind's Delight,
 Abortive Pang of Vanity and Spite!
 It shows a Master's Hand, 'twas Virgil's Praise,
 Things low and abject to adorn and raise.
 The Sun on Dungbills shining is as bright,
 As when his Beams the fairest Flowers invite,
 But all weak Eyes are hurt by too much Light.
 Let then these Owls against the Eagle preach,
 And blame those Flights which they want Wing to reach.
 Like Falstaffe let 'em conquer Heroes dead,
 And praise Greek Poets they cou'd never read.
 Criticks should personal Quarrels lay aside,
 The Poet from the Enemy divide.
 'Twas Charity that made our Author write,
 For your Instruction 'tis we Act to night;
 For sure no Age was ever known before,
 Wanting an Æcius and Lucina more.

Prologue intended for VALENTINIAN,

to be spoken by Mrs. Barrey.

Now would you have me rail, swell, and look big,
 Like rampant Tory over conchant Whig.
 As spit-fire Bullies swagger, swear, and roar,
 And brandish Bilbo, when the Fray is o're.

Must

Must we huff on when we're oppos'd by none?
 But Poets are most fierce on those who are down.
 Shall I jeer Popish Plots that once did fright us,
 And with most bitter Bobs taunt little Titus?
 Or with sharp Style, on sneaking Trimmers fall,
 Who civilly themselves Prudential call?
 Yet Witlings to true Wits as soon may rise,
 As a prudential Man can ere be wise.
 No, even the worst of all yet I will spare,
 The nauseous Floater, changeable as Air,
 A nasty thing, which on the surface rides,
 Backward and forward with all turns of Tides.
 An Audience I will not so coarsely use;
 'Tis the lowd way of every common Muse.
 Let Grubstreet-Pens such mean Diversion find,
 But we have Subjects of a nobler kind.
 We of legitimate Poets sing the praise,
 No kin to th' spurious Issue of these days.
 But such as with desert their Laurels gain'd,
 And by true Wit immortal Names obtain'd.
 Two like Wit-Consuls rul'd the former Age,
 With Love, and Honour grac'd that flourishing Stage,
 And every Passion did the Mind engage.
 They sweetness first into our Language brought,
 They all the Secrets of man's Nature sought,
 And lasting Wonders they have in conjunction wrought.

Now joyns a third, a Genius as sublime
 As ever flourish'd in Rome's happiest time.
 As sharply could he wound, as sweetly engage,
 As soft his Love, and as divine his Rage.
 He charm'd the tenderest Virgins to delight,
 And with his Style did fiercest Blockheads fright.
 Some Beauties here I see—
 Though now demure, have felt his pow'rful Charms,
 And languish'd in the circle of his Arms.
 But for ye Fops, his Satyr reach'd ye all,
 Under his Last your whole vast Herd did fall.
 Oh fatal loss! that mighty Spirit's gone!
 Alas! his too great heat went out too soon!

*So fatal is it vastly to excel ;
Thus young, thus mourn'd, his lov'd Lucretius fell.*

*And now ye little Sparks who infest the Pit,
Learn all the Reverence due to sacred Wit.
Disturb not with your empty noise each Bench,
Nor break your bawdy Jest's to th' Orange-wench ;
Nor in that Scene of Fops, the Gallery,
Vent your No-wit, and spurious Raillery :
That noisie Place, where meet all sort of Tools,
Your huge fat Lovers, and consumptive Fools,
Half Wits, and Gamesters, and gay Fops, whose Tasks
Are daily to invade the dangerous Masks ;
And all ye little Brood of Poetasters,
Amend and learn to write from these your Masters.*

Dram.

Drammatis PERSONÆ.

Valentia: Emperor.

Æcius The Roman General.

Maximus Lieutenant General.

Pontius A Captain.

Licinius

Balbus

Proculus

Chylax

Lycias

Lucina

Celandia

Marcellina

Ardellia

Phorba

Phidias

Arctus

} Servants to th' Emperor.

} An Eunuch belonging to *Maximus*.

} Wife to *Maximus*.

} Ladies attending *Lucina*.

} Lewd Women belonging to the Court.

} Friends to *Æcius*, and Servants to the Emperor.



THE
TRAGEDY
OF
VALENTINIAN.

ACT. I. SCEN. I.

The Curtain flies up with the Musick of Trumpets and Kettle-Drums; and discovers the Emperor passing through to the Garden, Attended with a great Court. Æcius and Maximus stay behind.

Maximus. Æcius.

Max. Great is the Honour, which our Emperor
Does by his frequent Visits throw on *Maximus*;
Not less than thrice this Week has his Gay-Court,
With all its Splendor shin'd within my Walls:
Nor does this glorious Sun bestow his Beams
Upon a barren Soyl, My happy Wife,
Fruitful in Charms for *Valentinian's* Heart,
Crowns the soft Moments of each welcome Hour,
With such variety of successive Joys,
That Lost in Love, when the long Day is done,
He willingly would give his Empire up
For the Enjoyment of a Minute more,
While I——

Made glorious through the Merit of my Wife,
Am at the Court ador'd as much as She,
As if the vast Dominion of the World
He had Exchang'd with me for my *Lucina*.

Æcius. I rather wish he would Exchange his Passions,
Give you his Thirst of Love for yours of Honour.
And leaving you the due possession
Of your just Wishes in *Lucina's* Arms,
Think how he may by force of Worth and Virtue,
Maintain the Right of his Imperial Crown,
Which he neglects for Garlands made of Roses;
Whilst, in disdain of his ill-guided Youth,
Whole Provinces fall off, and scorn to have
Him for their Prince, who is his Pleasures Slave.

Max. I cannot blame the Nations, Noble Friend,
For falling off so fast from this wild man,
When, under our Allegiance be it spoken,
And the most happy Tye of our Affections,
The whole World groans beneath him : By the Gods,
I'd rather be a Bondslave to his Panders,
Constrain'd by Power to serve their vicious Wills,
Than bear the Infamy of being held
A Favourite to this fowl flatter'd Tyrant.
Where lives Virtue,

Honour, Discretion, Wisdom ? Who are call'd
And chosen to the steering of his Empire,
But Whores and Bawds and Traitors ! Oh my *Æcius*,
The Glory of a Souldier, and the Truth
Of men made up for Goodness sake, like shells
Grow to the rugged Walls for want of Action,
Only your happy self and I that love you,
Which is a larger means to me than Favour.—

Æcius. No more, my worthy Friend, tho' these be Truths,
And tho' these Truths would ask a Reformation,
At least a little Mending—Yet remember
We are but Subjects, *Maximus*, Obedience
To what is done, And Grief for what's ill done,
Is all we can call Ours, The Hearts of Princes
Are like the Temples of the Gods: pure Incense,
(Till some unhallow'd Hands defile their Offerings,)

Burns ever there. We must not put 'em out
Because the Priests, who touch these Sweets are wicked.
We dare not, Dearest Friend ; Nay more, we cannot
(While we consider whose we are, and how,
To what Laws bound, much more to what Lawgiver,
While Majesty is made to be obey'd ;
And not enquir'd into.

Max. Thou best of Friends and Men, whose wise instructions
Are not less charitable, weigh but thus much,
Nor think I speak it with Ambition ,
For by the Gods I do not. Why my *Æcius*,
Why are we thus? or how became thus wretched?

Æcius. You'll fall again into your Fit.

Max. I will not

Or are we now no more the Sons of *Romans*,
No more the followers of their mighty Fortunes !
But conquer'd *Gauls*, And Quivers for the *Parthians* :
Why is the Emperor, this Man we honour,
This God that ought to be,

Æcius. You are too curious.

Max. Give me leave,——Why is this Author of us ?

Æcius. I dare not hear you speak thus.

Max. I'll be modest,

Thus led away, thus vainly led away,
And we beholders ! Misconceive me not,
I saw no Danger in my Words ; but wherefore
And to what end are we the Sons of Fathers
Famous and fast to *Rome* ! Why are their Virtues
Stamp'd in the Dangers of a thousand Battels,
Their Honours Time out-daring
I think for our Example.

Æcius. You speak well.

Max. Why are we Seeds of those then to shake hands
With Bawds and base Informers? Kiss Discredit,
And Court her like a Mistress ? Pray your leave yet,
You'll say th' Emperor's young, and apt to take
Impression from his Pleasures,
Yet even his Errors have their good Effects,
For the same gentle temper which inclines
His Mind to Softness, does his Heart defend

The TRAGEDY of

From savage thoughts of Cruelty and Blood,
Which throu' the streets of *Rome* in streams did flow
From Hearts of Senators under the Reigns
Of our severer Warlike Emperors?
While under this scarcely one Criminal
Meets the hard Sentence of the dooming Law,
And the whole World dissolv'd into a Peace,
Owes its Security to this Mans Pleasures;
But *Æcius*—be sincere, do not defend
Actions and Principles your Soul abhors.
You know this Virtue is his greatest Vice:
Impunity is the highest Tyranny:
And what the fawning Court miscals his Pleasures,
Exceeds the Moderation of a Man:
Nay to say justly, Friend, they are loath'd Vices,
And such as shake our Worths with Foreign Nations.

Æcius. You search the Sore too deep; and let me tell you
In any Other man, this had been Treason;
And so rewarded: Pray depress your Spirit;
For tho' I constantly believe you honest,
(You were no Friend for me else); and what now
You freely speak, But good you owe to the Empire,
Yet take heed, Worthy *Maximus*, all Ears.
Hear not with that distinction mine do, few you'll find
Admonishers, but Urgers of your Actions,
And to the Heaviest (Friend) and pray consider
We are but Shadows, Motions others give us,
And tho' our Pities may become the Times,
Our Powers cannot, nor may we justify
Our private Jealousies, by open Force,
Wife or what Else to me it matters not,
I am your Friend, but durst my own Soul urge me,
And by that Soul I speak my just Affections,
To turn my hand from Truth, which is Obedience,
And give the Helm my Virtue holds, to Anger,
Tho' I had both the Blessings of the *Bruti*
And both their instigations, tho' my Cause did most nobly
Carry'd a Face of Justice beyond theirs,
And as I am a Servant to my Fortunes,
That daring Soul that first taught Disobedience,
Should feel the first Example.

VALENTINIAN.

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Max. Mistake me not my dearest *Æcius*,
Do not believe that through mean Jealousie
How far th'Emperor's Passion may prevail
On my *Lucina's* thoughts to our Dishonour,
That I abhor the Person of my Prince,
Alas ! That Honour were a trivial Loss
Which she and I want merit to preserve ;
Virtue and *Maximus* are plac'd too near
Lucina's Heart, to leave him such a fear,
No private loss or wrong, inflames my Spirits,
The *Roman* Glory, *Æcius*, languishes ;
I am concern'd for *Rome*, and for the World,
And when th'Emperor pleases to afford
Time from his Pleasures, to take care of those,
I am his Slave, and have a Sword and Life
Still ready for his Service.

Æcius. Now you are brave,
And like a *Roman* justly are concern'd :
But say he be to blame. Are therefore we
Fit Fires to purge him? No, My Dearest Friend,
The Elephant is never won with Anger,
Nor must that man who would reclaim a Lion
Take him by the Teeth,
Our honest Actions, and the Truth that breaks
Like Morning from our Service chaste and blushing,
Is that that pulls a Prince back, then he sees
And not till then truly repents his Errors.

Max. My Heart agrees with yours : I'll take your Council,
The Emperor appears; let us withdraw
And as We both do love him, may he flourish.

Exeunt.

Enter *Valentinian* and *Lucina*.

Val. Which way, *Lucina*, hope you to escape,
The Censures both of Tyrannous and Proud,
While your Admirers languish by your Eyes
And at your feet an Emperor despairs !
Gods ! Why was I mark'd out of all your Brood
To suffer tamely under mortal hate ?
Is it not I that do protect your Shrines ?

Act 1

Am Author of your Sacrifice and Pray'rs ?
 Forc'd by whose great Commands the knowing World
 Submits to own your Beings and your Power.
 And must I feel the Torments of Neglect ?
 Betray'd by Love to be the Slave of Scorn ?
 But 'tis not you, Poor harmless Deities,
 That can make *Valentinian* sigh and mourn !
 Alas ! All Power is in *Lucina's* Eyes !
 How soon could I shake off this heavy Earth
 Which makes me little lower than your selves,
 And sit in Heaven an Equal with the first ;
 But Love bids me pursue a Nobler Aim.
 Continue Mortal, and *Lucina's* Slave,
 From whose fair Eyes, would pity take my part,
 And bend her Will to save a bleeding Heart,
 I in Her Arms such Blessings shou'd obtain,
 For which th'unenvy'd Gods might wish in vain.

Lucin. Ah ! Cease to tempt those Gods and Virtue too !
 Great Emperor of the World and Lord of me !
 Heaven has my Life submitted to your Will !
 My Honour's Heav'ns, which will preserve its own.
 How vile a thing am I when that is gone !
 When of my Honour you have ris'd me,
 What other Merit have I to be yours ?
 With my fair Fame let me your Subject live,
 And save that Humbleness you smile upon,
 Those Gracious Looks, whose brightness shou'd rejoyce,
 Make your poor Handmaid tremble when she thinks
 That they appear like Lightning's fatal Flash,
 Which by destructive Thunder is persu'd,
 Blasting those Fields on which it shin'd before !
 And shou'd the Gods abandon worthless Me
 A Sacrifice to shame and to dishonour ;
 A Plague to *Rome*, and Blot to *Cæsar's* Fame !
 For what Crime yet unknown shall *Maximus*
 By Me and *Cæsar* be made infamous ?
 The faithfull'st Servant, and the kindest Lord !
 So true, so brave, so gen'rous, and so just,
 Who ne'er knew fault : Why shou'd he fall to Shame ?

Val. Sweet Innocence ! Alas ! Your *Maximus*
 (Whom I like you esteem !) is in no Danger
 If Duty and Allegiance be no shame !
 Have I not Prætors through the spacious Earth
 Who in my Name do mighty Nations sway ?
 Enjoying rich Dominions in my Right ,
 Their Temporary Governments I change,
 Divide or take away, as I see good ;
 And this they think no Injury nor Shame ;
 Can you believe your Husband's Right to you
 Other than what from me he does derive ?
 Who justly may recall my own at pleasure ;
 Am I not Emperor ? This World my own ?
 Given me without a Partner by the Gods ?
 And shall those Gods who gave me all, allow
 That one less than my self should have a Claim
 To you the Pride and Glory of the whole ?
 You, without whom the rest is worthless dross ;
 Life a base Slavery, Empire but a Mock :
 And Love, the Soul of all, a bitter Curse !
 No, only Blessing, *Maximus* and I
 Must change our Provinces, the World shall bow
 Beneath my Scepter, grasp'd in his strong hand
 Whose Valour may reduce rebellious Slaves,
 And wise Integrity secure the rest :
 In all those Rights the Gods to me have given ;
 While I from tedious Toils of Empire free,
 The servile Pride of Government despise !
 Find Peace and Joy, and Love and Heav'n in Thee,
 And seek for all my Glory in those Eyes.

Lucina. Had Heav'n design'd for me so great a Fate,
 As *Cæsar's* Love I shou'd have been preserv'd,
 By careful Providence for Him alone,
 Not offer'd up at first to *Maximus* ;
 For Princes should not mingle with their Slaves,
 Nor seek to quench their Thirst in troubled streams.
 Nor am I fram'd with thoughts fit for a Throne.
 To be commanded still has been my Joy ;
 And to obey the height of my Ambition.
 When young in Anxious Cares I spent the Day,

Trembling

Trembling for fear least each unguided step
Should tread the paths of Error and of Blame:

Till Heav'n in gentle pity sent my Lord,
In whose Commands my Wishes meet their end,
Pleas'd and secure while following his Will;
Whether to live or die I cannot err.

You like the Sun, Great Sir, are plac'd above,
I, a low Mirtle, in the humble Vale,
May flourish by your distant influence,
But should you bend your Glories nearer me,
Such fatal Favour withers me to dust
Or I in foolish gratitude desire

To kiss your feet, by whom we live and grow,
To such a height I should in vain aspire,
VWho am already rooted here below
Fixt in my *Maximus's* Breast I lie!

Torn from that Bed, like gather'd Flow'rs, I die.

Val. Cease to oppress me with a thousand Charms!
There needs no succour to prevailing Arms!
Your Beauty had subdu'd my Heart before,
Such Virtue could alone enslave me more:

If you love *Maximus* to this degree!
How would you be in Love, Did you love Me?
In Her, who to a Husband is so kind,

VWhat Raptures might a Lover hope to find?

I burn, *Lucina*, like a Field of Corn

By flowing streams of kindled Flames ore-born

VWhen North-winds drive the Torrent with a storm, }

These Fires into my Bosom you have thrown,

And must in pity quench 'em in your own:

Heav'n, when it gave your Eyes th' Inflaming pow'r

VWhich was ordain'd to cast an Emperor

Into Loves Feaver, kindly did impart

That Sea of Milk to bathe his burning Heart.

Throu' all those Joys.

[*Lays hold on Her.*]

Lucina. Hold, Sir, for Mercy's sake—

Love will abhor whatever Force can take.

I may perhaps persuade my self in time

That this is Duty which now seems a Crime;

I'll to the Gods and begg they will inspire
My Breast or Yours with what it shoud desire.

Val. Fly to their Altars strait, and let 'em know
Now is their time to make me Friend or Foe,
If to my Wishes they your Heart incline,
Or th'are no longer Favourites of mine.

[Exit Lucina.

Ho Chylax, Proculus?

Enter Chylax, Proculus, Balbus and Lycin.

As ever you do hope to be by me
Protested in your boundless Infamy,
For Dissoluteness cherish'd, lov'd and prais'd
On Pyramids of your own Vices rais'd,
Above the reach of Law, Reproof or Shame,
Assist me now to quench my raging Flame.
Tis not as heretofore a Lambent Fire,
'Rais'd by some common Beauty in my Breast,
Vapours from Idleness or loose Desire,
By each new Motion easily suppress'd,
But a fixt Heat that robs me of all rest.

Before my Dazled Eyes cou'd you now place
A thousand willing Beauties to allure

And give me Lust for every loose Embrace,

Lucina's Love my Virtue would secure,

From the contagious Charm in vain I fly,

'Thas seiz'd upon my Heart, and may defie

That great Preservative Variety!

Go, call your Wives to Council, and prepare

To tempt, dissemble, promise, fawn and swear,

To make Faith look like Folly use your skill

Virtue an ill-bred Crossness in the Will.

Fame, the loose breathings of a Clamorous Crowd!

Ever in Lies most confident and loud!

Honour a Notion! Piety a Cheat!

And if you prove successful Bawds, be great.

Chy. All hindrance to your hopes we'll soon remove,

And clear the Way to your triumphant Love.

Bal. Lucina for your Wishes we'll prepare,

And shew we know to merit what we are

[Exeunt.

Val.

Val. Once more the pow'r of Vows and Tears I'll prove,
 These may perhaps her gentle Nature move,
 To Pity first, by consequence to Love,
 Poor are the Brutal Conquests we obtain
 Ore Barb'rous Nations by the force of Arms,
 But when with humble Love a Heart we gain,
 And plant our Trophies on our Conqu'rors Charms.

Enter Æcius.

Such Triumphs ev'n to us may honour bring
 No Glory's vain, which does from Pleasure spring:
 How now *Æcius*! Are the Souldiers quiet?

Æcius. Better I hope, Sir, than they were.

Val. Th'are pleas'd I hear
 To censure me extreemly for my Pleasures;
 Shortly they'l fight against me.

Æcius. Gods defend, Sir. And for their Censures they are
 Such shrewd Judges
 A Donative of ten Sexterces

I'll undertake shall make 'em ring your Praises
 More than they sung your Pleasures.

Val. I believe thee!
 Art thou in Love *Æcius* yet?

Æcius. Oh no, Sir, I am too coarse for Ladies, my Embraces,
 That only am acquainted with Allarms,
 Would break their tender Bodies.

Val. Never fear it.
 They are stronger than you think—
 The Empress swears thou art a Lusty Souldier,
 A good one I believe thee.

Æcius. All that Goodness is but your Creature, Sir.

Val. But tell me truly,
 For thou dar'st tell me;

Æcius. Any thing concerns you
 That's fit for me to speak, or you to pardon.

Val. What say the Souldiers of me! And the same Words,
 Mince 'em not, good *Æcius*, But deliver
 The very Forms and Tongues they talk withal.

Æcius.

Æcius. I'll tell you, Sir; but with this Caution
You be not stirr'd: For should the Gods live with us!
Even those we certainly believe are righteous,
Give 'em but Drink, They'd censure them too.

Val. Forward!

Æcius. Then to begin, They say you sleep too much,
By which they judge you, Sir, too sensual:
Apt to decline your strength to ease and pleasure:
And when you do not sleep, you drink too much;
From which they fear Suspitions first, then Ruine,
And when you neither drink nor sleep you guess, Sir,
Which they affirm first breaks your Understanding,
Then dulls the edge of Honour, makes them seem
That are the Ribs and Rampires of the Empire,
Fencers and beaten Fools, and so regarded:
But I believe 'em not: for were these Truths,
Your Virtue can correct them.

Val. They speak plainly.

Æcius. They say moreover, Sir, since you will have it;
For they will take their freedoms tho' the Sword
Were at their throats: That of late times like Nero,
And with the same forgetfulness of Glory
You have got a vein of Fidling: So they term it.

Val. Some drunken Dreamers, *Æcius.*

Æcius. So I hope, Sir.

They say besides, you nourish strange Devourers;
Fed with the Fat of the Empire, they call Bawds,
Lazy and lustful Creatures that abuse you.

Val. What Sin's next? for I perceive they have no mind
To spare me!

Æcius. Nor hurt you, on my Soul, Sir: but such people
(Nor can the pow'r of man restrain it)
When they are full of Meat, and Ease, must prate.

Val. Forward.

Æcius. I have spoken too much, Sir.

Val. I'll have all.

Æcius. It is not fit

Your Ears should hear their Vanities, no profit
Can justly arise to you from their Behaviour.
Unless you were guilty of these Crimes.

The TRAGEDY of

Val. It may be, I am so. Therefore forward.

Æcius. I have ever learn'd to obey.

Val. No more Apologies.

Æcius. They grieve besides, Sir,
To see the Nations whom our ancient Virtue
With many a weary March and Hunger conquer'd
With loss of many a daring Life subdu'd
Fall from their fair Obedience, and ev'n murmur
To see the Warlike Eagles mew their Honours,
In obscure Towns, that us'd to prey on Princes,
They cry for Enemies, and tell the Captain
The Fruits of *Italy* are Luscious: Give us *Ægypt*,
Or sandy *Affrick* to display our Valours,
There, where our Swords may get us Meat and Dangers!
Digest our well-got Food, for here our Weapons
And Bodies that were made for shining Bräs,
Are both unedg'd and old with Ease and Women!
And then they cry again, Where are the *Germans*
Lin'd with hot *Spain* or *Gallia*? Bring 'em near:
And let the Son of War, steel'd *Mithridates*
Pour on us his wing'd *Parthians* like a storm:
Hiding the face of Heav'n with show'rs of Arrows,
Yet we dare fight like *Romans*; then as Souldiers
Tyr'd with a weary March, they tell their Wounds
Ev'n weeping ripe, they were no more nor deeper,
And glory in these Scars that make 'em lovely.
And sitting where a Camp was, like sad Pilgrims
They reckon up the Times and loading Labours
Of *Julius* or *Germanicus*, and wonder
That *Rome*, whose Turrets once were topt with Honour
Can now forget the Custom of her Conquests;
And then they blame you, Sir—And say, Who leads us?
Shall we stand here like Statues? Were our Fathers
The Sons of lazy *Moors*, our Princes *Persians*!
Nothing but Silk and Softness? Curses on 'em
That first taught *Nero* Wantonness and Blood,
Tiberius Doubts, *Caligula* all Vices;
For from the spring of these succeeding Princes
Thus they talk, Sir.

Val. Well!

Why do you hear these things?

Æcius. Why do you do 'em?

I take the Gods to witness with more sorrow
And more vexation hear I these Reproaches
Than were my Life dropt from me through an Hour-Glass.

Val. 'Tis like then you believe 'em or at least
Are glad they should be so: Take heed — you were better
Build your own Tomb, and run into it living
Than dare a Prince's Anger.

Æcius. I am old, Sir:

And ten years more addition is but nothing:

Now if my Life be pleasing to you, take it.

Upon my knees, if ever any Service

(As let me brag, some have been worthy notice!)

If ever any Worth or Trust you gave me

Deserv'd a Favour, Sir; If all my Actions

The hazards of my Youth, Colds, Burnings, Wants

For You and for the Empire be not Vices:

By the stile you have stamp't upon me, Souldier!

Let me not fall into the Hands of Wretches.

Val. I understand you not.

Æcius. Let not this Body

That has look'd bravely in his Blood for *Cæsar*

And covetous of Wounds, and for your safety.

After the scape of Swords, Spears, Slings and Arrows,

'Gainst which my beaten Body was my Armour,

Throu' Seas, and thirsty Deserts, now be purchase

For Slaves and base informers: I see Anger

And Death, look throu' your Eyes—I am markt for

Slaughter, and know the telling of this Truth has made Me

A man clean lost to this World—I embrace it,

Only my last Petition, Sacred *Cæsar*!

Is, I may die a *Roman*.

Val. Rise! my Friend still,

And worthy of my Love: Reclaim the Souldiers!

I'll study to do so upon my self.

Go—keep your Command and prosper.

Æcius. Life to *Cæsar*.—

[Exit.

Val. The Honesty of this *Æcius*,
 Who is indeed the Bulwark of my Empire
 Is to be cherisht for the good it brings,
 Not valu'd as a Merit in the Owner!
 All Princes are Slaves bound up by Gratitude,
 And Duty has no Claim beyond Acknowledgment
 Which I'll pay *Æcius*, whom I still have found
 Dull, faithful, humble, vigilant and brave:
 Talents as I could wish 'em for my Slave:
 But oh this Woman!
 Is it a Sin to love this lovely Woman?
 No: She is such a Pleasure, being good;
 That though I were a God, shee'd fire my Blood.

The End of the First Act.

ACT. II. SCEN. I.

Enter Balbus, Proculus, Chylax, Lycinius.

Bal. I Never saw the like she's no more stirr'd,
 No more another Woman, no more alter'd
 With any Hopes or Promises laid to her,
 Let them be ne'r so weighty, ne'r so winning,
 Than I am with the motion of my own Legs.

Proc. Chylax!

You are a stranger yet in these Designs,
 At least in *Rome*, tell me, and tell me truth
 Did you e'er know, in all your course of Practice
 In all the ways of Women you have run through
 For I presume you have been brought up, *Chylax*,
 As we, to fetch and carry.

Chyl. True: I have too.

Proc. Did you, I say again in all this Progress
 Ever discover such a piece of Beauty

Ever

Ever so rare a Creature; and no doubt
 One that must know her worth too and affect it,
 I, and be flatter'd, else 'tis none: and honest
 Honest against the Tide of all Temptations?
 Honest to one Man, and to her Husband only,
 And yet not Eighteen, not of Age to know
 Why she is honest?

Chyl. I confess it freely

I never saw her Fellow, nor ever shall:
 For all our *Græcian* Dames as I have try'd
 And sure I have try'd a hundred,—if I say Two
 I speak within my Compass: All these Beauties
 And all the Constancy of all these Faces
 Maids, Widdows, Wives, of what Degree or Calling
 So they be *Greeks* and fat: for there's my Cunning
 I would vndertake, and not sweat for't: *Proculus*,
 Were they to try again, say twice as many
 Under a Thousand pound to lay them flat:
 But this Wench staggers me.

Lycin. Do you see these Jewels?

You would think these pretty Baits now; I'll assure you
 Here's half the Wealth of *Asia*.

Bal. These are nothing

To the full Honours I propounded to her.
 I bid her think and be, and presently
 Whatever her Ambition, what the Council
 Of others would add to her, What her Dreams
 Could more enlarge, What any President
 Of any Woman rising up to Glory;
 And standing certain there, and in the highest
 Could give her more, Nay to be Empress—

Proc. And cold at all these Offers?

Bal. Cold as Crystal,

Never to be thaw'd.

Chyl. I try'd her further:

And so far that I think she is no Woman.
 At least as Women go now.

Lycin. Why what did you?

Chyl.

Chy. I offered that, that had the been but Mistress
Of as much spleen as Doves have, I had reach'd Her
A safe Revenge of all that ever hate her,
The crying down for ever of all Beauties
That may be thought come near her.

Proc. That was pretty.

Chy. I never knew that way fail ; yet I tell you,
I offer'd her a Gift beyond all yours
That, that had made a Saint start well consider'd ;
The Law to be her Creature ; she to make it,
Her Mouth to give it ; Every thing alive
From her Aspect to draw their Good or Evil
Fixt in 'em spight of Fortune, a new Nature
She should be call'd, and Mother of all Ages ;
Time should be hers, what she did, flatt'ring Virtues
Should blest to all Posterities, Her Air
Should give us Life, Her Earth and Water feed us,
And last to none but to the Emp'ror.
(And then but when she pleas'd to have it so :)
She should be held a Mortal.

Lycin. And she heard you ?

Chy. Yes, as a sick man hears a Noise, or he
That stands condemn'd, his Judgment.
Well, if there can be Virtue, if that Name
Be any thing but Name, and empty Title,
If it be so as Fools are us'd to feign it,
A Power that can preserve us after Death,
And make the Names of Men out-reckon Ages,
This Woman has a God of Virtue in her.

Bal. I would the Emperor were that God.

Chy. She has in her—
All the Contempt of Glory, and vain seeming
Of all the *Stoicks*, All the Truth of *Christians*,
And all their Constancy ; Modesty was made
When she was first intended ; When she blushes
It is the holiest thing to look upon ;
The purest Temple of her Sex, that ever
Made Nature a blest Founder,
If she were any way inclining

To Ease or Pleasure, or affected Glory,
Proud to be seen or worshipp'd, 'twere a Venture:
But on my Soul she is chaster than cold Camphire.

Bal. I think so too: For all the ways of Woman
Like a full sail she bears against: I askt her
After my many Offers, walking with her,
And her many down Denials, How
If the Emperor grown mad with Love should force her?
She pointed to a *Lucrece* that hung by,
And with an angry Look—that from her Eyes
Shot Vestal Fire against me; she departed.

Pro. This is the first Woman I was ever posd in,
Yet I have brought young loving things together
This two and thirty Year.

Chyl. I find by this fair Lady
The Calling of a Bawd to be a strange
A wise and subtle Calling: And for none
But staid, discreet and understanding People:
And as the Tutor to great *Alexander*
VVould say, A young man should not dare to read
His Moral Books till after five and twenty,
So must that He or She that will be Bawdy,
(I mean discreetly Bawdy, and be trusted)
If they will rise and gain Experience
VVell steep in Years and Discipline, begin it—
I take it 'tis no Boys Play.

Bal. VVhat's to be thought of?

Proc. The Emperor must know it.

Lycin. If the VVomen should chance to fail too—

Chyl. As 'tis ten to one.

Proc. VVhy what remains but new Nets for the purpose—
Th' Emperor.—

Enter Valentinian.

Emp. VVhat! have you brought Her?

Chyl. Brought her, Sir! Alas,
VVhat would you do with such a Cake of Ice
VVhom all the Love i'th Empire cannot thaw.

A dull cross thing, insensible of Glory,
Deaf to all Promises, dead to Desire,
A tedious stickler for her Husband's Rights,
VVho like a Beggars Curr hath brought her up
To fawn on him, and bark at all besides.

Emp. Lewd and ill-manner'd Fool, wer't not for fear
To do thee good by mending of thy Manners
I'd have thee whipt! Is this thraccount you bring
To ease the Torments of my restless mind.

Balb. { *Cæsar!* In vain your Vassals have endeavourd
Kneeling. { By Promises, Perswasions, Reasons, VVealth,
All that can make the firmest Virtue bend
To alter Her. Our Arguments like Darts
Shot in the Bosom of the boundless Air
Are lost and do not leave the least Impression:
Forgive us, if we fail'd to overcome
Vertue that could resist the Emperor.

Emp. You impotent Provokers of my Lust,
VVho can incite and have no power to help,
How dare you be alive and I unsatisfied,
VVho to your Beings have no other Title
Nor least Hopes to preserve 'em, but my Smiles;
VVho play like poysonous Insects all the Day
In the warm Shine of Me your Vital Sun;
And when Night comes must perish——
VVretches! whose vicious Lives when I withdraw
The Absolute Protection of my Favour
VVill drag you into all the Miseries
That your own Terrors, Universal Hate,
And Law, with Jayls and VVhips can bring upon you;
As you have fail'd to satisfie my VVishes,
Perdition is the least you can expect
VVho durst to undertake and not perform!
Slaves! was it fit I should be disappointed
Yet live——

Continue infamous a little longer;
You have deserv'd to end. But for this once
I'll not tread out your nasty snuffs of Life;
But had your poysonous Flatteries prevail'd

Upon her Chastity I so admire,
 A Virtue that adds Fury to my Flames!
 Dogs had devour'd e're this your Carcasses;
 Is that an Object fit for my Desires
 VWhich lies within the reach of your persuasions!
 Had you by your infectious Industry
 Shew'd my *Lucina* frail to that degree,
 You had been damn'd for undeceiving me,
 But to possess her chaste and uncorrupted,
 There lies the Joy and Glory of my Love!
 A Passion too refin'd for your dull Souls,
 And such a Blessing as I scorn to owe
 The gaining of to any but my self:
 Haste strait to *Maximus*, and let him know
 He must come instantly and speak with me;
 The rest of you wait here—I'll play to night.
 You, sawcy Fool! send privately away
 For *Lycias* hither by the Garden Gate,
 That sweet-fac'd Eunuch that sung
 In *Maximus's* Grove the other day,
 And in my Closet keep him till I come.

[To Chylax.

[Exit Valent.

Chyl. I shall, Sir.

'Tis a soft Rogue, this *Lycias*
 And rightly understood,
 Hee's worth a thousand Womens Nicenesses!
 The Love of VWomen moves even with their Lust,
 VWho therefore still are fond, but seldom just:
 Their Love is Ufury, while they pretend,
 To gain the Pleasure double which they lend.
 But a dear Boy's disinterested Flame
 Gives Pleasure, and for meer Love gathers pain;
 „ In him alone Fondness sincere does prove,
 And the kind tender Naked Boy is Love.

[Exit.

The TRAGEDY of

SCENE 2. A GARDEN.

Enter Lucina, Ardelia and Phorla.

Ard. You still insist upon that Idol Honour,
Can it renew your Youth? Can it add VVealth?
Or take off wrinkles? Can it draw mens Eyes
To gaze upon you in your Age? Can Honour
That truly is a Saint to none but Souldiers,
And lookt into, bears no Reward but Danger,
Leave you the most respected VVoman living?
Or can the common Kisses of a Husband
(VVhich to a Sprightly Lady is a Labour)
Make you almost immortal? You are cozen'd,
The Honour of a VVoman is her Praises,
The way to get these, to be seen and sought to,
And not to bury such a happy Sweetness
Under a smoaking Roof.

Lucina. I'll hear no more.

Phorla. That VVhite and Red, and all that blooming Beauty,
Kept from the Eyes that make it so is nothing:
Then you are truly fair when men proclaim it:
The *Phoenix* that was never seen is doubted,
But when the Virtue's known, the Honour's doubled:
Virtue is either lame or not at all,
And Love a Sacriledge and not a Saint;
VVhen it barrs up the way to mens Petitions.

Ard. Nay you shall love your Husband too; VVe
Come not to make a Monster of you.

Lucin. Are you VVomen?

Ard. You'll find us so; and women you shall thank too
If you have but Grace to make your Use.

Lucin. Fie on you.

Phorla. Alas, poor bashful Lady! By my Soul
Had you no other Virtue, but your Blushes,
And I a man, I should run mad for those!
How prettily they set her off! how sweetly!

Ard. Come, Goddess, come! you move too near the Earth,
It must not be, a better Orb stays for you.

Lucin. Pray leave me.

Phorb. That were a Sin, sweet Madam, and a way
To make us guilty of your Melancholy,
You must not be alone; In Conversation
Doubts are resolv'd, and what sticks near the Conscience
Made easie and allowable.

Lucin. Ye are Devils.

Ard. That you may one day blefs for your Damnation.

Lucin. I charge you in the Name of Chastity
Tempt me no more: how ugly you seem to me!
There's no wonder Men defame our Sex,
And lay the Vices of all Ages on us,
When such as you shall bear the Name of Women!
If you had Eyes to see your selves, or sence,
Above the base Rewards yee earn with shame!
If ever in your Lives yee heard of Goodness
Tho' many Regions off,—as men hear Thunder;
If ever you had Fathers, and they Souls,
Or ever Mothers, and not such as you are!
If ever any thing were constant in you
Besides your Sins!
If any of your Ancestors
Dy'd worth a Noble Deed—that would be cherish'd,
Soul-frighted with this black Infection,
You would run from one anothers Repentance,
And from your Guilty Eyes drop out those Sins—
That made ye blind and Beasts.

Phorb. You speak well, Madam!

A sign of fruitful Education
If your religious Zeal had Wisdom with it.

Ard. This Lady was ordain'd to blefs the Empire,
And we may all give thanks for Her.

Phorb. I believe you.

Ard. If any thing redeem the Emperor
From his wild flying Courses this is she!
She can instruct him—if you mark—she's wise too.

Phor. Exceeding wise, which is a wonder in her;

And

And so religious that I well believe,
Tho' she wou'd sin she cannot.

Ard. And besides

She has the Empire's Cause in hand, not Love's,
There lies the main consideration
For which she is chiefly born.

Phor. She finds that Point
Stronger than we can tell her, and believe it
I look by her means for a Reformation,
And such a one, and such a rare way carry'd.

Ard. I never thought the Emperor had wisdom,
Pity, or fair Affection to his Country,
Till he profess this Love. Gods give 'em Children
Such as her Virtues merit and his Zeal;
I look to see a *Numa* from this Lady,
Or greater than *Octavius*.

Phor. Do you mark too
Which is a noble Virtue—how she blushes,
And what flowing Modesty runs through her
When we but name the Emperor.

Ard. Mark it!
Yes, and admire it too: for she considers
Tho' she be fair as Heav'n, and Virtuous
As holy Truth; Yet to the Emperor
She is a kind of Nothing— but her Service;
Which she is bound to offer, and she'll do it;
And when her Countries Cause commands Affection,
She knows Obedience is the Key of Virtues;
Then fly the Blushes out like *Cupid's* Arrows,
And though the Tie of Marriage to her Lord,
Would fain cry, slay *Lucina*—yet the Cause
And general Wisdom of the Prince's Love
Makes her find surer Ends and happier,
And if the first were chaste these are twice doubled.

Phor. Her Tartness to us too.

Ard. That's a wise one.

Phor. I like it, it shews a rising Wisdom,
That chides all common Fools who dare enquire
What Princes would have private.

Ard.

Ard. What a Lady shall we be blest to serve?

Lucin. Go—get you from me,

Yee are your Purfes Agents not the Princes,
Is this the virtuous Love you train'd me out to?
Am I a Woman fit to Imp your Vices?
But that I had a Mother and a Woman
Whose ever living Fame turns all it touches
Into the Good, it self was, I should now
Even doubt my self; I have been searcht so near
The very Soul of Honour. Why shou'd you Two
That happily have been as chaste as I am!
Fairer I think by much (For yet your Faces
Like Ancient well-built Piles shew worthy Ruines)
After that Angel Age, turn mortal Devils!
For Shame, for Womanhood, for what you have been
(For rotten Cedars have born goodly Branches)
If you have hope of any Heav'n but Court
Which like a Dream you'l find hereafter vanish:
Or at the best but subject to Repentance!
Study no more to be ill spoken of
Let Women live themselves; if they must fail;
Their own Destruction find 'em.

Ard. You are so excellent in all
That I must tell it you with Admiration!
So true a joy you have, so sweet a fear!
And when you come to Anger—'Tis so noble
That for my own part I could still offend
To hear you angry: Women that want that
And your way guided (else I count it nothing)
Are either Fools or Fearful.

Phorb. She were no Mistress for the World's great Lord
Could she not frown a ravisht Kiss from Anger,
And such an Anger as this Lady shews us
Stuck with such pleasing Dangers (Gods I ask yee)
Which of you all could hold from?

Lucin. I perceive you,
Your own dark Sins dwell with you and that price
You sell the Chastity of modest Wives at,
Run to Diseases with you—I despise you,

And •

And all the Nets you have pitcht to catch my Virtue,
 Like Spiders webs I sweep away before me!
 Go! tell th'Emperor, You have met a Woman,
 That neither his own Person, which is God-like,
 The VWorld he rules, nor what that VWorld can purchase,
 Nor all the Glories subject to a *Cæsar*!
 The Honours that he offers for my Honour,
 The Hopes, the Gifts, and everlasting Flatteries,
 Nor any thing that's His, and apt to tempt.
 No! not to be the Mother of the Empire
 And Queen of all the holy Fires he worships,
 Can make a VVhore of.

Ard. You mistake us, Madam.

Lucin. Yet tell him this, h'as thus much weaken'd me
 That I have heard his Slaves and you his Matrons.
 Fit Nurfes for his Sins! which Gods forgive me
 But ever to be leaning to his Folly,
 Or to be brought to love his Vice——Assure him
 And from her Mouth, whose Life shall make it certain,
 I never can; I have a Noble Husband
 Pray tell him that too: Yet a Noble Name,
 A Noble Family, and last a Conscience.
 Thus much by way of Answer; for your selves
 You have liv'd the shame of VVomen—die the better. [*Ex. Luc.*]

Phor. VVhat's now to do?

Ard. Even as she said, to die.

For there's no living here and VVomen thus,
 I am sure for us two.

Phor. Nothing stick upon her?——

Ard. VVe have lost a Mass of Money. VVell Dame Virtue,
 Yet you may halt if good Luck serve!

Phor. VVorms take her,

Ard. So Godly—

This is ill Breeding, *Phorba.*

Phor. If the VVomen

Should have a longing now to see the Monster
 And she convert 'em all!

Ard. That may be, *Phorba!*

But if it be I'll have the Young men hang'd,

—Come—let's go think—the must not scape us thus. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT. III. SCEN. I.

The Scene opens, and discovers the Emperor at Dice.

Maximus. Lycin. Proc. and Chylax.

Emp. **N**Ay! set my Hand out: 'Tis not just
I should neglect my Luck when 'tis so prosp'rous:

Chy. If I have any thing to set you, Sir, but Cloaths
And good Conditions, let me perish;
You have all my Money.

Proc. And mine.

Lycin. And mine too.

Max. You may trust us sure till to morrow,
Or if you please, I'll send home for Money presently.

Emp. 'Tis already Morning, and staying will be tedious.
My Luck will vanish ere your Money comes.

Chy. Shall we redeem 'em if we set our Houses?

Emp. Yes fairly.

Chy. That at my *Villa*——

Emp. At it——'Tis mine.

Chy. Then farewell, Fig-Trees: For I can ner redeem 'em.

Emp. VVho sets?——Set any thing.

Lycin. At my Horse.

Emp. The Dapple Spaniard?

Lycin. He.

Emp. He's mine.

Lycin. He is so.

Max. Hah!

Lycin. Nothing, my Lord! But Pox on my Damnd Fortune.

Emp. Come *Maximus*; You were not wont to flinch.

Max. By Heaven, Sir, I have not a Penny.

Emp. Then that Ring.

Max. O Good Sir, This was not given to lose.

Emp. Some Love-Token——Set it I say!

Max. I beg you, Sir.

Emp. How silly and how fond you are grown of Toys!

Max. Shall I redeem it ?

Emp. VVhen you please to morrow
Or next day as you will : I do not care
Only for luck-sake——

Max. There Sir, will you throw ?

Emp. Why then have at it fairly ; the last stake !
'Tis mine.

Max. Y'are ever fortunate ! to morrow
I'll bring you—what you please to think it worth.

Emp. Then your *Arabian Horse* : but for this night
I'll wear it as my Victory.

Enter Balbus.

Balb. From the Camp

Ælius in haste has sent these Letters, Sir ;
It seems the Cohorts mutiny for Pay.

Emp. Maximus—This is ill News. Next week they are to march.
You must away immediately ; no stay,
No, not so much as to take leave at home.
This careful haste may probably appease 'em ;
Send word, what are their Numbers ;
And Money shall be sent to pay 'em all.
Besides something by way of Donative.

Max. I'll not delay a moment, Sir,
The Gods preserve you in this mind for ever.

Emp. I'll see 'em march my self.

Max. Gods ever keep you——

[*Exit Max.*]

Emp. To what end now de'e think this Ring shall serve ?
For you are the dull'st and the veriest Rogues——
Fellows that know only by roat as Birds
Whistle and sing.

Chy. Why, Sir, 'tis for the Lady.

Emp. The Lady ! Blockhead ! which end of the Lady ?
Her Nose !

Chy. Faith, Sir, that I know not.

Emp.

* *Emp.* Then pray for him that does—— [Exit Chylax.
Fetch in the Eunuch;
You! See th'Apartment made very fine
That lies upon the Garden, Masks and Musick,
With the best speed you can. And all your Arts
Serve to the highest for my Master-piece
Is now on foot.

Proc. Sir, we shall have a care.

Emp. I'll sleep an hour or two; and let the Women
Put on a graver shew of Welcome!

Your Wives! they are such Haggard-Bawds.

A Thought too eager.

[Enter Chyl. and Lycias.

Chy. Here's *Lycias*, Sir.

Lyc. Long Life to mighty *Cæsar*.

Emp. Fortune to thee, for I must use thee *Lycias*.

Lyc. I am the humble Slave of *Cæsar's* Will,
By my Ambition bound to his Commands
As by my duty.

Emp. Follow me.

Lyc. With Joy.——

[Exeunt.

SCENE 2. GROVE and FOREST.

Enter Lucina.

Lucin. Dear solitary Groves where Peace does dwell,
Sweet Harbours of pure Love and Innocence!
How willingly could I for ever stay
Beneath the shade of your embracing Greens,
Lifting to Harmony of warbling Birds,
Tun'd with the gentle Murmurs of the Streams,
Upon whose Banks in various Livery
The fragrant offspring of the early Year
Their Heads like graceful Swans bent proudly down,
See their own Beauties in the Crystal Flood;
Of these I could mysterious Chaplets weave,
Expressing some kind innocent Design

To shew my *Maximus* at his Return
 And fondly chiding make his Heart confess
 How far my busie Idleness excels,
 The idle Business he persues all day,
 At the contentious Court or clamorous Camp
 Robbing my Eyes of what they love to see,
 My Ears of his dear Words they wish to hear
 My longing Arms of th'Embrace they covet:
 Forgive me, Heav'n! if when I these enjoy,
 So perfect is the happiness I find
 That my Soul satisf'd feels no Ambition
 To change these humble Roofs and sit above.

Enter Marcellina.

Marc. Madam, My Lord just now alighted here,
 Was by an Order from th'Emperor
 Call'd back to Court!
 This he commanded me to let you know,
 And that he would make haste in his return.

Lucin. The Emperor!
 Unwonted Horror seizes me all o're,
 When I but hear him nam'd: sure 'tis not Hate;
 For tho' his impious Love with scorn I heard,
 And fled with terror from his threatening force
 Duty commands me humbly to forgive
 And bless the Lord to whom my Lord does bow!
 Nay more methinks he is the gracefulest man,
 His Words so fram'd to tempt, himself to please,
 That 'tis my wonder how the Pow'rs above,
 Those wise and careful Guardians of the Good,
 Have trusted such a force of tempting Charms
 To Enemies declar'd of Innocence!

'Tis then some strange Prophetick Fear I feel
 That seems to warn me of approaching Ills.
 Go *Marcellina*, fetch your Lute, and sing that Song
 My Lord calls his: I'll try to wear away
 The Melancholy Thoughts his Absence breeds!
 Come gentle Slumbers in your flattering Arms

I'll bury these Disquiets of my Mind
Till *Maximus* returns—for when he's here
My Heart is rais'd above the reach of Fear.

Marcellina sings——

SONG. By Mr. W.

WHere wou'd coy *Aminta* run
From a despairing Lovers Story?
When her Eyes have Conquests won,
Why shou'd her Ear refuse the Glory?
Shall a Slave whom Racks constrain
Be forbidden to complain?
Let her scorn me, let her fly me,
Let her Lookes her Life deny me.
Ne're can my Heart change for Relief,
Or my Tongue cease to tell my Grief;
Much to Love and much to Pray
Is to Heaven the only Way.

Mar. She sleeps.

[The Song ended, Exeunt *Claudia*
and *Marcellina* before the Dances.]

SCENE 3. Dance of Satyrs.

Enter Claudia and Marcellina to Lucia.

Claud. Prithee, what ails my Lady, that of late
She never cares for Company.

Marc. I know not
Unless it be that Company causes Cuckolds.

Claud. Ridiculous! That were a Childish Fear!
'Tis Opportunity does cause 'em rather,
When two made one are glad to be alone.

Marc. But *Claudia*—Why this sitting up all Night

In Groves by purling streams? This argues Heat
Great Heat and Vapors, which are main Corrupters
Mark when you will; Your Ladies that have Vapors
They are not Flinchers, that insulting Spleen
Is the Artillery of pow'rful Lust;
Discharg'd upon weak Honour which stands out
Two Fits of Head-Ach, at the most, then yields.

Claudia. Thou art the frailest Creature, *Marcellina!*
And think'st all Womens Honours like thy own!
So thin a Cobweb that each blast of Passion
Can blow away: But for my own part, Girl!
I think I may be well stil'd Honours Martyr.
With firmest Constancy I have endur'd
The raging Heats of passionate Desires!
While flaming Love and boyling Nature both
Were pour'd upon my Soul with equal Torture:
I arm'd with Resolution stood it out
And kept my Honour safe.

Marc. Thy Glory's great!
But, *Claudia*, Thanks to Heav'n that I am made
The weakest of all women: fram'd so frail
That Honour ne'er thought fit to chuse me out,
His Champion against Pleasure: my poor Heart
For divers years still tost from Flame to Flame,
Is now burnt up to Tinder every Spark
Dropt from kind Eyes sets it a-fire afresh,
Prest by a gentle hand I melt away,
One Sigh's a Storm that blows me all along;
Pity a wretch, who has no Charm at all,
Against th'impetuous Tide of flowing Pleasure,
Who wants both Force and Courage to maintain
The glorious War made upon Flesh and Blood,
But is a Sacrifice to every wish
And has no power left to resist a Joy.

Claud. Poor Girl! How strange a Riddle Virtue is?
They never miss it who possess it not;
And they who have it ever find a want.
With what Tranquility and Peace thou liv'st
For stript of Shame; Thou hast no cause to fear;

While

While I the Slave of Virtue am afraid
Of every thing I see: And think the World
A dreadful wilderness of savage Beasts;
Each man I meet I fancy will devour me;
And sway'd by Rules nor natural but affected
I hate Mankind for fear of being lov'd.

Marc. 'Tis nothing less than Witchcraft can constrain
Still to persist in Errors we perceive!
Prithee reform; what Nature prompts us to,
And Reason seconds, why should we avoid?
This Honour is the veriest Mountebank,
It fits our Fancies with affected Tricks,
And makes us freakish; what a Cheat must that be
Which robs our Lives of all their softer hours,
Beauty, our only Treasure it lays waste.
Hurries us over our neglected Youth,
To the detested state of Age and Ugliness,
Tearing our dearest Hearts Desires from us.
Then in reward of what it took away
Our Joys, our Hopes, our Wishes and Delights
It bountifully pays us all with Pride!
Poor shifts! still to be proud and never pleas'd,
Yet this is all your Honour can do for you.

Claud. Concluded like thy self, for sure thou art
The most corrupt corrupting thing alive,
Yet glory not too much in cheating Wit:
'Tis but false VVisdom; and its Property,
Has ever been to take the part of Vice,
VVhich tho' the Fancy with vain shows it please,
Yet wants a power to satisfy the Mind.

Lucina wakes.

Claud. But see my Lady wakes and comes this way.
Bless me! how pale and how confus'd she looks!

Luc. In what Fantastique new world have I been?
VVhat Horrors past? what threatening Visions seen?
VVrapt as I lay in my amazing Trance,
The Host of Heav'n and Hell did round me Dance:

Debates arose betwixt the Pow'rs above
 And those below : Methoughts they talkt of Love.
 And nam'd me often ; but it could not be
 Of any Love that had to do with me.
 For all the while they talk'd and argu'd thus,
 I never heard one word of *Maximus*.
 Discourteous Nymphs ! who own these murmuring Floods
 And you unkind Divinities o'th' VVoods !
 VVhen to your Banks and Bowers I came distrest
 Half dead throu' Absence seeking Peace and Rest.
 VVhy would you not protect by these your Streams
 A sleeping wretch from such wild dismal Dreams !
 Mishapen Monsters round in Measures went
 Horrid in Form with Gestures insolent ;
 Grinning throu' Goatish Beards with half clos'd Eyes,
 They look'd me in the face frighted to rise !
 In vain I did attempt, methought no Ground
 VVas to support my sinking Footsteps ! found.
 In clammy Fogs like one half choak'd I lay,
 Crying for help my Voyce was snatch'd away.

And when I would have fled,
 My Limbs benumm'd, or dead.

Could not my Will with Terror wing'd obey
 Upon my absent Lord for help I cry'd
 But in that Moment when I must have dy'd :
 With Anguish of my Fears confusing pains
 Relenting Sleep loos'd his Tyrannick Chains

Claud. Madam, Alas such Accidents as these
 Are not of value to disturb your Peace !

The cold damp-Dews of Night have mixt and wrought }
 With the dark Melancholy of your Thought. }
 And throu' your Fancy these Illusions brought.
 I still have markt your Fondness will afford
 No hour of Joy in th' absence of my Lord.

*Enter Lycias.**A Ring!**Lucin.* Absent, all night—and never send me word?*Lycias.* Madam, while sleeping by those Banks you lay!

One from my Lord commanded me away.

In all obedient haste I went to Court,

Where busie Crowds confus'dly did resort ;

News from the Camp it seems was then arriv'd

Of Tumults rais'd and Civil Wars contriv'd ;

The Emperor frighted from his Bed does call

Grave Senators to Council in the Hall——

Throng of ill-favour'd Faces fill'd with Scars

Wait for Employments praying hard for Wars

At Council Door attend with fair pretence

In Knavish Decency and Reverence

Banquers, who with officious Diligence——

Lend Money to supply the present need

At treble Use that greater may succeed,

So publick Wants will private Plenty breed,

Whisp'ring in every Corner you might see.

Lucin. But what's all this to *Maximus* and me?

Where is my Lord? what Message has he sent?

Is he in Health? What fatal Accident,

Does all this while his wisht Return prevent?

Lycias. When ere the Gods that happy hour decree,

May he appear safe and with Victory;

Of many Hero's who stood Candidate

To be the Arbiters 'twixt *Rome* and Fate ;

To quell Rebellion and protect the Throne

A Choice was made of *Maximus* alone;

The People, Souldiers, Senate, Emperor

For *Maximus* with one consent concur.

Their new-born hopes now hurry him away,

Nor will their Fears admit one moments stay :

Trembling through Terror lest he come too late

They huddle his Dispatch while at the Gate

The Emperor's Chariots to conduct him wait.

Lucina. These fatal Honours my dire Dream foretold!
 Why should the Kind be ruin'd by the Bold?
 He ne'r reflects upon my Destiny
 So careless of himself, undoing mee
 Ah *Claudia*! in my Visions so unskill'd
 Hee'l to the Army go and there be kill'd.
 Forgetful of my Love; Hee'l not afford
 The easie Favour of a parting Word;
 Of all my Wishes hee's alone the Scope
 And hee's the only End of all my Hope,
 My fill of Joy, and what is yet above
 Joys, Hopes, and Wishes—He is all my Love:
 Mysterious Honour tell me what thou art!
 That takes up diff'rent Forms in every Heart;
 And dost to diverse Ends and Interests move
 Conquest is his—my Honour is my Love.
 Both these do Paths so oppositely chuse
 By following one you must the other lose.
 So two strait Lines from the same Point begun
 Can never meet, tho' without end they run——
 Alas, I rave!

Lycias. Look on thy Glory, Love, and smile to see
 Two faithful Hearts at strife for Victory!
 Who blazing in thy sacred Fires contend
 While both their equal Flames to Heav'n ascend,
 The God that dwells in Eyes light on my Tongue
 Left in my Meslage I his Passion wrong;
 You'l better guess the Anguish of his Heart,
 From what you feel, then what I can impart;
 But Madam, know the Moment I was come,
 His watchful Eye perceiv'd me in the Room;
 When with a quick precipitated haste
 From *Cæsar's* Bosom where he stood embrac'd
 Piercing the busie Crowd to me he past—— }
 Tears in his Eyes; his Orders in his Hand,
 He scarce had Breath to give this short Command.
 With thy best speed to my *Lucina* fly,
 If I must part unseen by her I dy,

Decrees inevitable from above,
 And Fate which takes too little Care of Love,
 Force me away : Tell her 'tis my Request,
 By those kind Fires she kindled in my Breast ;
 Our future Hopes and all that we hold dear,
 She instantly wou'd come and see me here.
 That parting Grievs to her I may reveal
 And on her Lips propitious Omens seal.
 Affairs that press in this short space of time
 Afford no other place without a Crime ;
 And that thou maist not fail of wisht for Ends
 In a success whereon my Life depends
 Give her this Ring. [Looks on the Ring.

Lucin. How strange soever these Commands appear
 Love awes my Reason, and controuls my Fear.
 But how couldst thou employ thy lavish Tongue
 So idly to be telling this so long !
 When ev'ry moment thou hast spent in vain,
 Was half the Life that did to me remain.
 Flatter me, Hope, and on my Wishes smile,
 And make me happy yet a little while.
 If through my Fears I can such Sorrow show
 As to convince I perish if he go :
 Pity perhaps his Gen'rous Heart may move
 To sacrifice his Glory to his Love.
 I'll not despair !

Who knows how eloquent these Eyes may prove
 Begging in Floods of Tears and Flames of Love. [Exit Lucina.

Lycias. Thanks to the Devil, my Friend, now all's our own, }
 How easily this mighty work was done ! }
 Well ! first or last all Women must be won—— }

"It is their Fate and cannot be withstood
 "The wise do still comply with Flesh and Blood ;
 "Or if through peevish Honour Nature fail
 "They do but lose their Thanks ; Art will prevail. [Exit.

SCENE 4.

Enter Æcius pursuing Pontius, and Maximus following.

Max. Temper your self, *Æcius*.

Pont. Hold, my Lord—I am a Souldier and a Roman!

Max. Pray Sir!

Æcius. Thou art a lying Villain and a Traytor.
Give me my self, or by the Gods, my Friend,
You'll make me dang'rous: How dar'st thou pluck
The Souldiers to Sedition and I living?
And sow Seeds of rank Rebellion even then
VVhen I am drawing out to Action?

Pont. Hear me!

Max. Are you a man?

Æcius. I am true, *Maximus*!
And if the Villain live, we are dishonour'd.

Max. But hear him what he can say!

Æcius. That's the way
To pardon him, I am so easie-Natur'd,
That if he speak but humbly, I forgive him.

Pont. I do beseech you, worthy General!

Æcius. H'has found the way already. Give me room,
And if he scape me then, H'has Mercy.

Pont. I do not call you VVorthy, that I fear you:
I never car'd for Death; if you will kill me,
Consider first for what! not what you can do:

'Tis true I know you are my General;
And by that great Prerogative may kill.—

Æcius. He argues with me!
By Heav'n a made-up finisht Rebel.

Max. Pray, consider what certain ground you have

Æcius. What Grounds?
Did I not take him preaching to the Souldiers,
How lazily they liv'd; and what dishonour
It was to serve a Prince so full of Softness!
These were his very Words, Sir.

Max. These! *Æcius*,
Tho' they were rashly spoken, which was an Error,

A great one, *Pontius*! yet from him that hungers
For War, and brave Employment might be pardon'd!
The Heart, and harbour'd Thoughts of ill makes Traytors,——
Not spleeny Speeches——

Æcius. Why should you protect him?
Go to——it scarce shews honest——

Max. Taint me not!
For that shews worse, *Æcius*! All your Friendship
And that pretended Love you lay upon me;
(Hold back my Honesty!) is like a Favour
You do your Slave to day—to morrow hang him;
Was I your Bosom-Friend for this?

Æcius. Forgive me!
So zealous is my Duty for my Prince,
That oft it makes me to forget my self;
And tho' I strive to be without my Passion,
I am no God, Sir; For you whose infection
Has spread it self like Poyson throu' the Army,
And cast a killing Fogg on fair Allegiance!
First thank this Noble Gentleman; you had dy'd else:
Next from your Place and Honour of a Souldier
I here seclude you.

Pont. May I speak yet?

Max. Hear him.

Æcius. And while *Æcius* holds a Reputation
At least Command! you bear no Arms for Rome, Sir.

Pont. Against her I shall never: The condemn'd man
Has yet the priviledge to speak, my Lord,
Law were not equal else.

Max. Pray hear, *Æcius*,
For happily the fault he has committed
Tho' I believe it mighty; yet consider'd,
If Mercy may be thought upon will prove
Rather a hasty Sin than heinous.

Æcius. Speak.

Pont. 'Tis true, my Lord, you took me tir'd with peace
My Words as rough and ragged as my Fortune,
Telling the Souldiers what a man we serve
Led from us by the Flourishes of Fencers;
I blam'd him too for softness.

Æcius.

Æcius. To the rest, Sir.

Pont. 'Tis true I told 'em too

We lay at home to shew our Country

We durst go naked, durst want Meat and Money;

And when the Slaves drink Wine, we durst be thirsty.

I told 'em too the Trees and Roots

Were our best Pay-masters.

'Tis likely too I counsell'd 'em to turn

Their warlike Pikes to Plow-shares, their sure Targets

And Swords hatcht with the Blood of many Nations

To Spades and Pruning-Knives: their warlike

Eagles, into Daws and Starlings.

Æcius. What think you

Were these Words to be spoken by a Captain

One that should give Example?

Max. 'Twas too much.

Pont. My Lord! I did not wooe 'em from the Empire,

Nor bid 'em turn their daring Steel against *Cæsar*;

The Gods for ever hate me if that motion

Were part of me; Give me but Employment

And way to live, and where you find me vicious

Bred up to mutiny, my Sword shall tell you,

And if you please that Place I held maintain it

'Gainst the most daring Foes of *Rome*, I'm honest!

A Lover of my Country one that holds

His Life no longer His than kept for *Cæsar*:

Weigh not—(I thus low on my Knee beseech you!

What my rude Tongue discover'd 'twas my want,

No other part of *Pontius*; You have seen me

And you, my Lord, do something for my Country,

And both the wounds I gave and took

Not like a backward Traytor.

Æcius. All your Language

Makes but against you, *Pontius*! you are cast,

And by my Honour and my Love to *Cæsar*

By me shall never be restor'd in Camp;

I will not have a Tongue, tho' to himself

Dare talk but near Sedition: As I govern

All shall obey, and when they want, their Duty

And ready Service shall redress their needs,

Not prating what they would be.

Pont.

Pont. Thus I leave you,
Yet shall my Pray'rs, altho' my wretched Fortune
Must follow you no more, be still about you.
Gods give you where you fight the Victory!
You cannot cast my wishes.

Æcius. Come, my Lord!
Now to the Field again.

Max. Alas poor *Pontius*!

[*Exit.*

The End of the Third Act.

ACT. IV. SCEN. II.

Enter Chylax at one Door, Lycinius and Balbus at another.

Lyc. **H**OW now!

Chy. Shee's come.

Balb. Then I'll to the Emperor!

[*Ex. Balb.*

Chy. Is the Musick plac'd well?

Lyc. Excellent.

Chy. *Lycinius*, you and *Proculus* receive 'em
In the great Chamber at her Entrance.

Lycin. Let us alone.

Chy. And do you here *Lycinius*.

Pray let the Women ply her farther off.

And with much more Discretion, one word more

Are all the Maskers ready?

Lycin. Take no care man.

[*Ex.*

Chyl. I am all over in a Sweat with Pimping;
'Tis a laborious moyling Trade this.—

Enter Emperor, Balb. and Procul.

Emp. Is she come?

Chy. She is, Sir! but 'twere best
That you were last seen to her.

Emp.

Emp. So I mean.

Keep your Court empty *Proculus*.

Proc. 'Tis done Sir.

Emp. Be not too sudden to her.

Chy. Good sweet Sir

Retire and Man your self: Let us alone,
We are no Children this way: One thing Sir!

'Tis necessary, that her She-Companions
Be cut off in the Lobby by the Women,
They'll break the Business else.

Emp. 'Tis true: They shall.

Chy. Remember your Place, *Proculus*.

Proc. I warrant you—— [*Ex. Emp. Balb. and Proculus.*

Enter Lucina, Claudia, Marcellina and Lycias.

Chyl. She enters! Who waits there? The Emperor
Calls for his Chariots, He will take the Air.

Lucin. I am glad I came in such a happy hour
When hee'll be absent: This removes all Fears;
But *Lycias* lead me to my Lord,
Heav'n grant he be not gone.

Lyc. Faith, Madam, that's uncertain!
I'll run and see. But if you miss my Lord
And find a better to supply his Room,
A Change so happy will not discontent you.— [*Exit.*

Luc. What means that unwonted Insolence of this Slave?
Now I begin to fear again. Oh—Honour,
If ever thou hadst Temple in weak Woman
And Sacrifice of Modesty offer'd to Thee
Hold me fast now and I'll be safe for ever.

Chy. The fair *Lucina*; Nay then I find
Our Slander'd-Court has not sinn'd up so high
To fright all the good Angels from its Care,
Since they have sent so great a Blessing hither.
Madam—I beg the Advantage of my Fortune,
Who as I am the first have met you here,
May humbly hope to be made proud and happy
With the honour of your first Command and Service.

Lucin. Sir—I am so far from knowing how to merit

Your

Your Service, that your Complements too much,
And I return it you with all my heart.

You'l want it Sir, for those who know you better.

Chy. Madam, I have the honour to be own'd
By *Maximus* for his most humble Servant,
Which gives me Confidence.

Marc. Now *Claudia*, for a Wager,
What thing is this that cringes to my Lady?

Claud. Why some grave States-man, by his looks a Courtier.

Marc. *Clandia* a Bawd: By all my hopes a Bawd!
What use can reverend Gravity be of here,
To any but a trusty Bawd?

States-men are markt for Fops by it, besides
Nothing but Sin and Laziness could make him
So very fat, and look so fleshy on't.

Lucin. But is my Lord not gone yet do you say Sir?

Chy. He is not Madam, and must take this kindly,
Exceeding kindly of you, wondrous kindly,
You come so far to visit him. Ple guide you.

Lucin. Whither?

Chy. Why to my Lord.

Lucin. Is it impossible
To find him in this Place without a Guide,
For I would willingly not trouble you?

Chy. My only trouble, Madam, is my fear,
I'm too unworthy of so great an Honour.
But here you're in the publick Gallery,
Where th' Emperor must pass, unless you'd see him.

Lucin. Bless me Sir—No—pray lead me any whither,
My Lord cannot be long before he finds me. [Exeunt.]

Enter Lycinius, Proculus, and Balbus. Musick.

Lycin. She's coming up the Stairs: now the Musick,
And as that softens—her love will grow warm,
Till she melts down. Then *Cæsar* lays his Stamp.
Burn these Perfumes there.

Proc. Peace, no noise without.

The TRAGEDY of

A SONG.

Nymph.

I Njurious Charmer of my vanquish'd Heart,
Canst thou feel Love, and yet no pity know?
Since of my self from thee I cannot part,
Invent some gentle Way to let me go.

For what with Joy thou didst obtain,
And I with more did give;
In time will make thee false and vain,
And me unfit to live.

Shepherd.

Frail Angel, that won'dst leave a Heart forlorn,
With vain pretence falsehood therein might lye;
Seek not to cast wild shadows o're your scorn,
You cannot sooner change than I can dye.

To tedious life I le never fall,
Thrown from thy dear lov'd Breast;
He merits not to live at all,
Who cares to live unblest.

Chor.

Then let our flaming Hearts be joy'd,
While in that sacred fire;
Ere thou prove false, or I unkind,
Together both expire.

Enter Chyl. Lucina, Claudia, Marcellina.

Lucin. Where is this Wretch, this Villain *Lycias*?
Pray Heav'n my Lord be here; for now I fear it.
I am certainly betray'd. This cursed Ring
Is either counterfeit or stol'n.

Claud. Your fear
Does but disarm your Resolution,
Which may defend you in the worst Extreame:
Or if that fail. Are there not Gods and Angels?

Lucin. None in this Place I fear but evil ones.
Heav'n pity me.

Chy. But tell me, dearest Madam,
How do you like the Song?

Lucin.

Lucin. Sir, I am no Judge
Of Musick, and the words, I thank my Gods,
I did not understand.

Chy. The Emperor
Has the best Talent at expounding 'em;
You'll ne'r forget a Lesson of his Teaching.

Lucin. Are you the worthy Friend of *Maximus*
Would lead me to him? He shall thank you Sir,
As you desire.

Chy. Madam, he shall not need,
I have a Master will reward my Service,
When you have made him happy with your Love,
For which he hourly languishes—Be kind——

[*Whispers.*]

Lucin. The Gods shall kill me first.

Chy. Think better on't.
'Tis sweeter dying in th' Emperor's Arms.

Enter Phorba and Ardellia.

But here are Ladies come to see you, Madam,
They'l entertain you better. I but tire you;
Therefore I'll leave you for a while, and bring
Your lov'd Lord to you——

[*Exit.*]

Lucin. Then I'll thank you.
I am betray'd for certain.

Phorb. You are a welcome Woman.

Ard. Bless me Heaven!
How did you find your way to Court?

Lucin. I know not; would I had never trod it.

Phorb. Prithee tell me. [Call Emperor behind.
Good pretty Lady, and dear sweet Heart, love us,
For we love thee extreamly. Is not this Place
A Paradise to live in?

Lucin. Yes to you,
Who know no Paradise but guilty Pleasure.

Ard. Heard you the Musick yet?

Lucin. 'Twas none to me.

Phor. You must not be thus froward. Well, this Gown
Is one o'th' prettiest, by my troth *Ardelia*,
I ever saw yet; 'twas not to frown in, Madam.

You put this Gown on when you came.

Ard. How dee ye?

Alas, poor Wretch, how cold it is!

Lucin. Content you.

I am as well as may be, and as temperate,

So you will let me be so——Where's my Lord?

For that's the business I come for hither.

Phor. We'll lead you to him: he's i'th' Gallery.

Ard. We'll shew you all the Court too.

Lucin. Shew me him, & you have shew'd me all I come to look on.

Phor. Come on, we'll be your Guides; and as you go,
We have some pretty Tales to tell you, Madam,
Shall make you merry too. You come not hither
To be sad, *Lucina*.

Lucin. Would I might not——

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Chylax and Balbus in haste.

Chyl. Now see all ready, *Balbus*: run.

Balb. I fly Boy——

[*Exit.*]

Chy. The Women by this time are warning of her,
If she holds out them; the Emperor
Takes her to task——he has her——Hark, I hear 'em.

Enter Emperor drawing in Lucina. Ring.

Emp. Would you have run away so slyly, Madam?

Lucin. I beseech you Sir,
Consider what I am, and whose.

Emp. I do so.

For what you are, I am fill'd with such Amaze,
So far transported with Desire and Love,
My slippery Soul flows to you while I speak,
And whose you were, I care not, for now you are mine,
Who love you, and will doat on you more
Than you do on your Vertue.

Lucin. Sacred *Cesar*.

Emp. You shall now kneel to me; rise.

Lucin. Look upon me,
And if you be so cruel to abuse me,

Think

Think how the Gods will take it. Does this Face
Afflict your Soul? I'll hide it from you ever;
Nay more, I will become so leprous,
That you shall curse me from you. My dear Lord
Has ever serv'd you truly— fought your Battels,
As if he daily long'd to die for *Cæsar*;
Was never Traitor Sir, nor never tainted,
In all the Actions of his Life.

Emp. How high does this fantastick Vertue swell?
She thinks it Infamy to please too well.
I know it——

[*Aside.*
[*To her.*

Lucin. His Merits and his Fame have grown together,
Together flourish'd like two spreading Cedars,
Over the *Roman* Diadem. O let not.
(As you have a Heart that's humane in you)
The having of an honest Wife decline him;
Let not my Vertue be a Wedge to break him,
Much less my Shame his undetery'd Dishonour.
I do not think you are so bad a man;
I know Report belyes you; you are *Cæsar*,
Which is the Father of the Empires Glory:
You are too near the Nature of the Gods,
To wrong the weakest of all Creatures, Woman.

Emp. I dare not do it here. Rise, fair *Lucina*.
When you believe me worthy, make me happy
Chylax; wait on her to her Lord within.
Wipe your fair Eyes——

[*Aside.*

Ah Love! ah cursed Boy!

[*Exeunt.*

Where art thou that torments me thus unseen,
And ragest with thy Fires within my Breast,
With idle purpose to inflame her Heart,
Which is as inaccessible and cold,
As the proud tops of those aspiring Hills,
Whose Heads are wrapt in everlasting Snow,
Tho' the hot Sun roll o're 'em every day?
And as his Beams, which only shine above,
Scorch and consume in Regions round below,
Soft Love which throws such brightness thro' her eyes,
Leaves her Heart cold, and burns me at her feet;
My Tyrant, but her flattering Slave thou art,

A Glory round her lovely Face, a Fire within my Heart.
Who waits without? *Lycinius?*

Enter Lycinius.

Lycin. My Lord.

Emp. Where are the Masquers that should dance to night?

Lycin. In the old Hall Sir, going now to practise.

Emp. About it strait. 'Twill serve to draw away
Those listning Fools, who trace it in the Gallery;
And if by chance odd noises should be heard,
As Womens Shrieks, or so, say, 'tis a Play
Is practising within.

Lycin. The Rape of *Lucrece*,
Or some such merry Prank——It shall be done Sir.

[*Ex.*

Emp. 'Tis nobler like a Lion to invade,
Where Appetite directs, and seize my Prey,
Than to wait tamely like a begging Dog,
Till dull Consent throws out the Scraps of Love.
I scorn those Gods who seek to cross my Wishes,
And will in spite of 'em be happy: Force
Of all the Powers is the most generous;
For what that gives, it freely does bestow,
Without the after-Bribe of Gratitude.
I'll plunge into a Sea of my Desires,
And quench my Fever, tho' I drown my Fame,
And tear up Pleasure by the Roots: No matter
Tho' it never grow again; what shall ensue,
Let Gods and Fate look to it; 'tis their Business.

[*Exit*

SCENE III.

Opens and discovers 5 or 6 Dancing-masters practising.

1 *Dan.* That is the damn'd shuffling Step, Pox on't.

2 *Dan.* I shall never hit it.

Thou hast naturally

All the neat Motions of a merry Tailor,

Ten thousand Riggles with thy Toes inward,

Cut clear and strong: let thy Limbs play about thee;

Keep

Keep time, and hold thy Back upright and firm :
It may prefer thee to a waiting Woman.

1 *Dan.* Or to her Lady, which is worse.

Enter Lycinius.

[*Ten dance.*

Lycin. Bless me, the loud Shrieks and horrid Outcries
Of the poor Lady ! Ravishing d'ye call it ?

She roars as if she were upon the Rack :

'Tis strange there should be such a difference
Betwixt half-ravishing, which most Women love,
And through force, which takes away all Blame,
And should be therefore welcome to the vertuous.
These tumbling Rogues, I fear, have overheard 'em ;
But their Ears with their Brains are in their Heels.

Good morrow Gentlemen :

What is all perfect ? I have taken care
Your Habits shall be rich and glorious.

3 *Dan.* That will set off. Pray sit down and see,
How the last Entry I have made will please you.

Second Dance.

Lycin. 'Tis very fine indeed.

2 *Dan.* I hope so Sir——

[*Ex. Dancers.*

Enter Chyl. Proculus and Lycias.

Proc. 'Tis done *Lycinius.*

Lycin. How ?

Proc. I blush to tell it.

If there be any Justice, we are Villains,
And must be so rewarded.

Lycias. Since 'tis done,
I take it is not time now to repent it,
Let's make the best of our Trade.

Chy. Now Vengeance take it :
Why should not he have settl'd on a Beauty,
Whose Modesty stuck in a piece of Tissue ?
Or one a Ring might rule ? or such a one
That had a Husband itching to be honourable,
And ground to get it ? If he must have Women,

And

And no allay without 'em, why not those
That know the Mystery, and are best able
To play a Game with judgment, such as she is?
Grant they be won with long siege, endless travel,
And brought to opportunities with millions,
Yet when they come to Motion, their cold Vertue
Keeps 'em like Beds of Snow.

Lycin. A good Whore
Had sav'd all this, and happily as wholsom,
And the thing once done as well thought of too.
But this same Chastity forsooth.

Chy. A Pox on't.
Why should not Women be as free as we are?
They are, but will not own it, and far freer,
And the more bold you bear your self, more welcom,
And there is nothing you dare say but Truth,
But they dare hear.

Proc. No doubt of it — away,
Let them who can repent, go home and pray. [Exeunt.]

Scene opens, discovers th' Emperor's Chamber. Lucina newly unbound by th' Emperor.

Emp. Your only Vertue now is Patience,
Be wise and save your Honour; if you talk —

Lucin. As long as there is Life in this Body,
And Breath to give me words, I'll cry for Justice.

Emp. Justice will never hear you; I am Justice.

Lucin. Wilt thou not kill me Monster, Ravisher?
Thou bitter Bane o'th' Empire, look upon me,
And if thy guilty eyes dare see the Ruines
Thy wild Lust hath laid level with Dishonour,
The sacrilegious razing of that Temple,
The Tempter to thy black sins would have blusht at.
Behold, and curse thy self. The Gods will find thee,
That's all my Refuge now, for they are righteous;
Vengeance and Horror circle thee. The Empire,
In which thou liv'st a strong continu'd Surfeit,

Like Poyson will disgorge thee ; good men raze thee
 From ever being read agen ;
 Chast Wives and fearful Maids make Vows against thee ;
 Thy worst Slaves, when they hear of this, shall hate thee,
 And those thou hast corrupted, first fall from thee,
 And if thou let'st me live, the Souldier
 Tired with thy Tyrannies break thro' Obedience,
 And shake his strong Steel at thee.

Emp. This prevails not,
 Nor any Agony you utter Madam :
 If I have done a sin, curse her that drew me ;
 Curse the first Cause, the Witchcraft that abus'd me ;
 Curse your fair Eyes, and curse that heav'nly Beauty,
 And curse your being good too.

Lucin. Glorious Thief !
 What restitution canst thou make to save me ?

Emp. I'll ever love — and ever honour you.

Lucin. Thou canst not ;
 For that which was my Honour, thou hast murder'd ;
 And can there be a Love in Violence ?

Emp. You shall be only mine.

Lucin. Yet I like better
 Thy Villainy than Flattery ; that's thy own,
 The other basely counterfeit. Fly from me,
 Or for thy safeties sake and wisdom kill me ;
 For I am worse than thou art : Thou maist pray,
 And so recover Grace — I am lost for ever,
 And if thou let'st me live, thou'rt lost thy self too.

Emp. I fear no loss but Love — I stand above it.

Lucin. Gods ! what a wretched thing has this man made me ?
 For I am now no Wife for *Maximus* ;
 No Company for Women that are virtuous ;
 No Family I now can claim or Countrey,
 Nor Name but *Cæsar's* Whore : Oh sacred *Cæsar* !
 (For that should be your Title) was your Empire,
 Your Rods and Axes that are Types of Justice,
 And from the Gods themselves — to ravish Women.
 The Curses that I owe to Enemies, ev'n those the *Sabins* sent,
 When *Romulus* (as thou hast me) ravish'd their noble Maids,
 Ma de more and heavier light on thee.

Emp. This helps not.

Lucin. The sins of *Tarquin* be remember'd in thee,
And where there has a chaste Wife been abus'd,
Let it be thine, the Shame thine, thine the Slaughter,
And last for ever thine the fear'd Example.
Where shall poor Vertue live now I am fallen?
What can your Honours now and Empire make me,
But a more glorious Whore?

Emp. A better Woman.

If you be blind and scorn it, who can help it?
Come leave these Lamentations; you do nothing.
But make a noise——I am the same man still,
Were it to do agen: Therefore be wiser; by all
This holy Light I would attempt it.
You are so excellent, and made to ravish,
There were no pleasure in you else.

Lucin. Oh Villain!

Emp. So bred for man's Amazement, that my Reason
And every help to do me right has left me:
The God of Love himself had been before me,
Had he but Eyes to see you, tell me justly
How should I choose but err——then if you will
Be mine and only mine (for you are so precious)
I envy any other should enjoy you;
Almost look on you, and your daring Husband
Shall know he has kept an Offring from th' Emperor,
Too holy for the Altars——be the greatest;
More than my self I'll make you; if you will not,
Sit down with this and silence: for which wisdom,
You shall have use of me, if you divulge it,
Know I am far above the faults I do,
And those I do, I am able to forgive;
And where your credit in the telling of it
May be with gloss enough suspected, mine
Is as my own Command shall make it. Princes
Tho' they be sometimes subject to loose Whispers,
Yet wear they two edg'd Swords for open Censures:
Your Husband cannot help you, nor the Souldiers;
Your Husband is my Creature, they my Weapons,
And only where I bid 'em strike——I feed 'em.

Nor can the Gods be angry at this Action,
Who as they made me greatest, meant me happiest,
Which I had never been without this pleasure.
Confider, and farewell. You'll find your Women
Waiting without.

[Ex. Emperor.]

Lucin. Destruction find thee.

Now which way shall I go—my honest House
Will shake to shelter me—my Husband fly me,
My Family,
Because they're honest, and desire to be so.
Is this the end of Goodness? This the price
Of all my early pray'rs to protect me?
Why then I see there is no God—but Power,
Nor Vertue now alive that cares for us,
But what is either lame or sensual;
How had I been thus wretched else?

Enter Maximus and Æcius.

Æcius. Let *Titus*

Command the Company that *Pontius* lost.

Max. How now sweet Heart!
What make you here and thus?

Æcius. *Lucina* weeping.
This is some strange offence.

Max. Look up and tell me.
Why art thou thus? my Ring! oh Friend I have found it!
You are at Court then.

Lucin. This and that vile Wretch *Lycius* brought me hither.

Max. Rise and go home. I have my Fears, *Æcius.*
Oh my best Friend! I am ruin'd. Go *Lucina*,
Already in thy tears I've read thy Wrongs.
Already found a *Cæsar*? Go thou Lilly,
Thou sweetly drooping Flower; be gone, I say,
And if thou dar'st—outlive this Wrong.

Lucin. I dare not.

Æcius. Is that the Ring you lost?

Max. That, that *Æcius*,
That cursed Ring, my self and all my Fortunes have undone.
Thus pleas'd th' Emperor, my noble Master,
For all my Services and Dangers for him,

To make me my own Pandar! was this Justice?
Oh my *Æcius*! have I liv'd to bear this?

Lucin. Farewel for ever Sir!

Max. That's a sad saying;

But such a one becomes you well, *Lucina*.

And yet methinks we should not part so slightly;

Our Loves have been of longer growth, more rooted

Than the sharp blast of one Farewel can scatter.

Kiss me—I find no *Cæsar* here. These Lips

Taste not of Ravisher, in my opinion.

Was it not so?

Lucin. O yes.

Max. I dare believe you.

I know him and thy truth too well to doubt it.

Oh my most dear *Lucina*! oh my Comfort!

Thou Blessing of my Youth! Life of my Life!

Æcius. I have seen enough to stagger my Obedience.

Hold me, ye equal Gods! this is too sinful.

Max. Why wert thou chosen out to make a Whore of,

Thou only among millions of thy Sex?

Unfeignedly vertuous! fall, fall chrystal Fountains,

And ever feed your Streams, you rising Sorrows,

Till you have wept your Mistress into marble.

Now go for ever from me.

Lucin. A long farewell Sir!

And as I have been faithful Gods, think on me.

Æcius. Madam farewell, since you resolve to die.

Which well consider'd,

If you can cease a while from these strange thoughts,

I with were rather alter'd.

Lucin. No.

Æcius. Mistake not.

I would not stain your Virtue for the Empire,

Nor any way decline you to Dishonour:

It is not my profession, but a Villain's;

I find and feel your loss as deep as you do,

And still am the same *Æcius*, still as honest;

The same Life I have still for *Maximus*,

The same Sword wear for you where Justice bids me,

And 'tis no dull one. Therefore misconceive me not.

Only

Only I'd have you live a little longer.

Lucin. Alas Sir! why

Am I not wretched enough already?

Æcins. To draw from that wild man a sweet repentance,
And goodness in his days to come.

Max. They are so.

And will be ever coming, my *Æcins.*

Æcins. For who knows but the sight of you, presenting
His swoln sins at the full, and your wrong'd Vertue,
May like a fearful Vision fright his Follies,
And once more bend him right again, which Blessing
If your dark Wrongs would give you leave to read,
Is more than Death, and the Reward more glorious;
Death only eases you. This the whole Empire
Besides compell'd and forc'd by violence,
To what was done. The deed was none of yours;
For should th' eternal Gods desire to perish,
Because we daily violate their Truth,
Which is the Chastity of Heav'n? No Madam—

Lucin. The Tongues of Angels cannot alter me.

For could the World again restore my Honour,

As fair and absolute as ere I bred it,

That World I should not trust; again, the Emperor

Can by my Life get nothing but my Story,

Which whilst I breathe must be his Infamy:

And where you counsel me to live, that *Cæsar*

May see his Errors and repent; I'll tell you,

His Penitence is but increase of Pleasure;

His Pray'rs are never said but to deceive us;

And when he weeps, (as you think, for his Vices)

'Tis but as killing Drops from baleful Yew-trees,

That rot his harmless Neighbours, if he can grieve

As one that yet desires his free Conversion,

I'll leave him Robes to mourn in—my sad Ashes.

Æcins. The Farewel then of happy Souls be with thee,

And to thy Memory be ever sung,

The Praises of a just and constant Woman:

This sad day whilst I live, a Souldier's Tears

I'll offer on thy Monument.

Max. All that is chaste upon thy Tomb shall flourish;

All living Epitaphs be thine ; Times Story,
And what is left behind to piece our Lives,
Shall be no more abus'd with Tales and Trifles.

Æcius. But full of thee stand to Eternity,
Once more farewell—Go find *Elizium*,
There where deserving Souls are crown'd with Blessings.

Max. There where no vicious Tyrants come : Truth, Honour,
Are keepers of that blest Place ; go thither. [Ex. *Lucina*.

Æcius. Gods give thee Justice.
His Thoughts begin to work, I fear him yet ;
He ever was a worthy *Roman*, but
I know not what to think on't. He has suffer'd
Beyond a man, if he stand this.

Max. Æcius,
Am I alive, or has a dead Sleep seiz'd me ?
It was my Wife th' Emperor abus'd thus,
And I must say—I am glad I had her for him.
Must I not *Æcius* ?

Æcius. I am stricken
With such a stiff Amazement, that no Answer
Can readily come from me, nor no Comfort.
Will you go home, or go to my House ?

Max. Neither.
I have no home, and you are mad *Æcius*,
To keep me Company—I am a Fellow
My own Sword would forsake, not tyed to me.
By Heav'n I dare do nothing.

Æcius. You do better.

Max. I am made a branded Slave, *Æcius*,
Yet I must blest the Maker.
Death on my Soul ! shall I endure this tamely ?
Must *Maximus* be mention'd for his Wrongs ?
I am a Child too ; what do I do railing ?
I cannot mend my self. 'Twas *Cæsar* did it.
And what am I to him ?

Æcius. 'Tis well remember'd ;
However you are tainted, be not Traitor.

Max. O that thou wert not living, and my Friend !

Æcius. I'll bear a wary Eye upon your Actions :
I fear you, *Maximus*, nor can I blame you,

If you break out ; for by the Gods, your Wrong
Deserves a general Ruine. Do you love me ?

Max. That's all I have to live on.

Æcius. Then go with me.

You shall not to your own House.

Max. Nor to any.

My Grievs are greater far than Walls can compass ;
And yet I wonder how it happens with me.
I am not dang'rous, and in my Conscience,
Should I now see the Emperor i'th' heart on't,
I should scarce blame him for't : an awe runs thro' me,
I feel it sensibly that binds me to it,
'Tis at my Heart now, there it sits and rules,
And methinks 'tis a pleasure to obey it.

Æcius. This is a Mask to cozen me. I know you,
And how far you dare do. No *Roman* farther,
Nor with more fearless valour, and I'll watch you.

Max. Is a Wifes loss —

More than the fading of a few fresh Colours ?

Æcius. No more, *Maximus*,
To one that truly lives.

Max. Why then I care not ; I can live well enough, *Æcius* :
For look you, Friend, for Vertue and those Trifles,
They may be bought they say.

Æcius. He's craz'd a little.

His grief has made him talk things from his nature.
Will you go any ways ?

Max. I'll tell thee Friend,
If my Wife for all this should be a Whore now,
'Twould vex me,

For I am not angry yet. The Emperor
Is young and handsome, and the Woman Flesh,
And may not these two couple without Scratching ?

Æcius. Alas, my *Maximus* !

Max. Alas not me, I am not wretched, for there's no man miserable
But he that makes himself so.

Æcius. Will you walk yet ?

Max. Come, come, she dares not die, Friend, that's the truth on't.
She knows the enticing Sweets and Delicacies
Of a young Princes Pleasure, and I thank her,

She

She has made way for *Maximus* to rise.

Wilt not become me bravely?

Aecius. Dearest Friend,

These wild words shew your violated mind,

Urg'd with the last extremity of grief;

Which since I cannot like a Man redress,

With tears I must lament it like a Child;

For when 'tis *Cæsar* does the injury,

Sorrow is all the Remedy I know.

Max. 'Tis then a certain truth that I am wrong'd,

Wrong'd in that barb'rous manner I imagin'd:

Alas, I was in hopes I had been mad,

And that these Horrors which invade my Heart,

Were but distracted melancholy Whimseys:

But they are real truths (it seems) and I

The last of men, and vilest of all Beings.

Bear me cold Earth, who am too weak to move

Beneath my load of Shame and Misery!

Wrong'd by my lawful Prince, robb'd of my Love,

Branded with everlasting infamy.

Take pity Fate, and give me leave to die:

Gods! would you be ador'd for being good,

Or only fear'd for proving mischievous?

How would you have your Mercy understood?

Who could create a Wretch like *Maximus*,

Ordain'd tho' guiltless to be infamous?

Supream first Causes! you, whence all things flow,

Whose infiniteness does each little fill,

You, who decree each seeming Chance below,

(So great in Power) were you as good in Will,

How could you ever have produc'd such ill?

Had your eternal minds been bent to good?

Could humane happiness have prov'd so lame,

Rapine, Revenge, Injustice, thirst of Blood,

Grief, Anguish, Horror, Want, Despair and Shame,

Had never found a Being nor a Name.

'Tis therefore less impiety to say,

Evil with you has Coeternity,

Than blindly taking it the other way,

That merciful and of election free,

You

You did create the mischiefs you foresee.
Wretch that I am, on Heav'n to exclaim,
When this poor tributary Worm below,
More than my self in nothing but in name,
Who durst invade me with this fatal Blow,
I dare not crush in the revenge I owe.
Not all his Power shall the wild Monster save ;
Him and my shame I'll tread into one Grave.

Æcius. Does he but seem so ?

Or is he mad indeed ?——Now to reprove him,
Were council lost ; but something must be done
With speed and care, which may prevent that Fate
Which threatens this unhappy Emperor.

Max. O Gods ! my Heart, would it would fairly break ;
Methinks I am somewhat wilder than I was,
And yet I thank the Gods I know my Duty.

Enter Claudia.

Claud. Forgive me my sad Tidings Sir——She's dead,

Max. Why so it should be—— [*He rises*] How ?

Claud. When first she enter'd

Into the House, after a world of weeping,
And blushing like the Sun-set——
Dare I, said she, defile my Husband's House,
Wherein his spotless Family has flourish'd ?
At this she fell——Choakt with a thousand sighs !
And now the pleas'd expiring Saint,
Her dying Looks, where new born Beauty shines,
Opprest with Blushes, modestly declines,
While Death approacht with a Majestick Grace,
Proud to look lovely once in such a Face :
Her Arms spread to receive her welcome Guest,
With a glad sigh she drew into her Breast :
Her Eyes then languishing tow'rd's Heaven she cast,
To thank the Powers that Death was come at last.
And at the approach of the cold silent God ;
Ten thousand hidden Glories rush'd abroad.

Max. No more of this——Begon. Now my *Æcius*,
If thou wilt do me pleasure, weep a little ;

I am so parcht I cannot—Your Example
Has taught my tears to flow—Now lead away Friend,
And as we walk together—Let us pray,
I may not fall from truth,

Æcius. That's nobly spoken.

Max. Was I not wild, *Æcius*?

Æcius. You were troubled.

Max. I felt no sorrows then, but now my Grief,
Like festering Wounds grown cold begins to smart,
The raging Anguish gnaws and tears my Heart.
Lead on and weep, but do not name the Woman.

[*Exeunt.*]

The End of the fourth Act.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Æcius Solus. A Letter.

Æcius. **L**OOK down, ye equal Gods, and guide my heart,
Or it will throw upon my hands an act
Which after Ages shall record with horror:
As well may I kill my offended Friend,
As think to punish my offending Prince.
The Laws of Friendship we our selves create,
And 'tis but simple Villany to break 'em;
But Faith to Princes broke, is Sacriledge,
An injury to the Gods, And that lost Wretch
Whose Breast is poyson'd with so vile a Purpose,
Tears Thunder down from Heav'n on his own head,
And leaves a Curse to his Posterity:
Judge him your selves, ye mighty Gods, who know
Why you permit sometimes that Honour bleed,
That Faith be broke, and Innocence oppress.

My

My Duty's my Religion, and howe're
The great Account may rise 'twixt him and you,
Through all his Crimes I see your Image on him,
And must protect it no way then but this,
To draw far off the injur'd *Maximus*,
And keep him there fast Prisoner to my Friendship;
Revenge shall thus be flatter'd or destroy'd,
And my bad Master whom I blush to serve,
Shall by my means at least be safe. This Letter
Informs him I am gone to *Ægypt*, there
I shall live secure and innocent;
His sins shall ne're o'ertake me, nor his fears,

Enter Proculus.

Here comes one for my Purpose, *Proculus*;
Well met, I have a Courtesie to ask of you.

Proc. Of me, my Lord! Is there a House on fire?
Or is there some knotty Point now in debate
Betwixt your Lordship and the Scavengers?
For you have such a popular, and publick Spirit,
As in dull times of Peace will not disdain
The meanest opportunity to serve your Country.

Æcius. You witty Fools are apt to get your Heads broke:
This is no season for Buffooning Sirrah;
Though heretofore I tamely have endur'd
Before th' Emperour your ridiculous Mirth,
Think not you have a Title to be sawcy;
When Monkey's grow mischievous, they are whipt,
Chain'd up and whipt. There has been mischief done,
And you (I hear) a wretched Instrument:
Look to't, when e're I draw this Sword to punish,
You and your grinning Crew will tremble, Slaves;
Nor shall the ruin'd world afford a Corner
To shelter you, nor that poor Princes Bosom,
You have invenom'd and polluted so;
As if the Gods were willing it should be
A Dungeon for such Toads to crawl and croak in.

Proc. All this in earnest to your humblest Creature?
Nay, then my Lord, I must no more pretend

With my poor Talent to divert your Ears;
 Since my well-meaning Mirth is grown offensive.
 Tho' Heav'n can tell,

There's not so low an Act of servile Duty,
 I wou'd not with more Pride throw my self on,
 For great *Æcius's* sake, than gain a Province,
 Or share with *Valentinian* in his Empire.

Æcius. Thou art so fawning and so mean a Villain,
 That I disdain to hate, tho' I despise thee;
 When e're thou art not fearful, thou art sawcy;
 Be so again, my Pardon gives thee leave,
 And to deserve it, carry this my Letter
 To the Emperor: Tell him I am gone for *Ægypt*,
 And with me, *Maximus*; 'twas scarce fit we two
 Should take our leaves of him: Pray use your Interest
 He may forgive us. 'Twill concern you much,
 For when we are gone, to be base vicious Villains,
 Will prove less dang'rous—— [Exit *Æcius*.

Proc. What the Devil possesses
 This rusty Back and Breast without a Head-Piece?
 Villains and Vicious! *Maximus* and *Ægypt*!
 This may be Treason, or Ile make it so:
 The Emperor's apt enough to fears and jealousies;
 Since his late Rape. I must blow up the fire,
 And aggravate this doating Hero's Notions,
 Till they such Terrors in the Prince have bred,
 May cost the Fool his worst part, that's his Head, [Exit.

SCENE II.

Enter Emperor, Lycinius, Chylax, and Balbus.

Emp. Dead?

Balb. 'Tis too certain.

Emp. How?

Lycin. Grief and Disgrace,

As people say.

Emp. No more, I have too much on't,
 Too much by you. You whetters of my Follies;
 Ye Angel-formers of my sins; but Devils,

Where

Where is your cunning now ? you would work Wonders.
There was no Chastity above your practice;
You'd undertake to make her love her Wrongs,
And doat upon her Rape. Mark what I tell you,
If she be dead!

Chy. Alas Sir!

Emp. Hang you Rascals.
Ye blasters of my Youth, if she be gone,
'Twere better ye had been your Fathers Camels,
Groan'd under weights of Wooll and Water.
Am I not *Cesar*?

Lycin. Mighty, and our Maker——

Emp. Then thus have given my Pleasures to destruction——
Look she be living, Slaves——

Chy. We are no Gods, Sir,
If she be dead, to make her live again.

Emp. She cannot dye, she must not dye: are those
I plant my Love upon but common livers?
Their Hours told out to 'em? Can they be Ashes?
Why do you flatter a belief in me,
That I am all that is? The World my Creature;
The Trees bring forth their Fruit, when I say Summer;
The Wind that knows no limits but its wildness,
At my command moves not a Leaf: The Sea,
With his proud mountain-Waters envying Heav'n,
When I say still, runs into chrystal Mirrors.
Can I do this and she dye? Why ye Bubbles,
That with my least breath break, no more remember'd,
Ye Moths that fly about my Flames and perish;
Why do ye make me God, that can do nothing?
Is she not dead?

Chy. All Women are not dead with her.

Emp. A common Whore serves you, and far above you,
The Pleasures of a Body lam'd with lewdness,
A meer perpetual Motion makes you happy.
Am I a man to traffick with Diseases?
You think, because ye have bred me up to Pleasures,
And almost run me over all the rare ones,
Your Wives will serve the turn; I care not for 'em,
Your Wives are Fencers Whores, and shall be Footmens,

Tho'

Tho' sometimes my Fantaſtick Luſt or Scorn,
 Has made you Cuckolds for variety ;
 I wou'd not have ye hope or dream, ye poor ones,
 Always ſo great a Bleſſing from me. Go,
 Get your own Infamy hereafter Rascals ; ye enjoy
 Each one an Heir, the Royal Seed of *Cæſar*,
 And I may curſe ye for it.

Thou *Lycinus*,
 Haſt ſuch a *Meſſelina*, ſuch a *Lais*,
 The Backs of Bulls cannot content, nor Stallions,
 The ſweat of fifty men anight does nothing.

Lycin. I hope Sir, you know better things of her.

Emp. 'Tis Oracle,

The City can bear witneſs, thine's a Fool, *Chylax*,
 Yet ſhe can tell her twenty, and all Lovers,
 All have lain with her too ; and all as ſhe is,
 Rotten and ready for an Hoſpital:
 Yours is a holy Whore, friend *Balbus*.

Balb. Well Sir.

Emp. One that can pray away the Sins ſhe ſuffers,
 But not the Punishment ; ſhe has had ten Baſtards,
 Five of 'em now are Liſtors, yet ſhe prays.
 She has been the Song of *Rome* and common Paſquil,
 Since I durſt ſee a Wench, ſhe was Camp-Miſtreſs,
 And muſter'd all the Cohorts, paid 'em too,
 They have it yet to ſhew, and yet ſhe prays.
 She is now to enter old Men turn'd Children,
 That have forgot their Rudiments ; and am I
 Left for theſe wither'd Vices ? And was there but one,
 But one of all the World that could content me,
 And ſnatcht away in ſhewing ? if your Wives
 Be not yet Witches, or your ſelves ? now be ſo,
 And ſave your Lives ; raiſe me the deareſt Beauty,
 As when I forc'd her full of Chaſtity,
 Or by the Gods——

Lycin. Moſt ſacred *Cæſar*——

Emp. Slaves.

Enter Proculus.

Proc. Hail *Cæsar*, Tidings of Concern and Danger,
My Message does contain in furious manner,
With Oaths and Threatnings, stern *Æcius*,
Enjoyn'd me on the peril of my life,
To give this Letter into *Cæsar's* hands,
Arm'd at all points, prepar'd to march he stands,
With crowds of mutinous Officers about him,
Among these, full of Anguish and Despair,
Like pale *Typhone* along Hell-brinks,
Plotting Revenge and Ruine——*Maximus*
With Ominous aspect walks in silent horror,
In threatening Murmurs and harsh broken speeches,
They talk of *Ægypt* and their Provinces,
Of Cohorts ready with their lives to serve 'em,
And then with bitter Curses they nam'd you.

Emp. Go tell thy fears to thy Companions, Slave!
For 'tis a Language Princes understand not ;
Be gone, and leave me to my self. [*Ex. all but Emperor.*]
The names of *Æcius* and of *Maximus*,
Run thro' me like a Fever, shake and burn me ;
But to my Slaves I must not shew my poorness.
They know me vicious, shou'd they find me base,
How would the Villains scorn me and insult ?

Letter. He reads.

Sir,
Would some God inspire me with another way to serve you,
I would not thus fly from you without leave ; but
Maximus his wrongs have toucht too many, and should
His presence here incourage 'em, dangers to you might follow ;
In Ægypt he will be more forgot, and you more safe by his
Absence.

Emp. A Plot, by Heav'n ! a Plot laid for my Life,
This is too subtle for my dull friend *Æcius* ;
Heav'n give you Sir, a better servant to guard you,

A faithfuller you will never find than *Æcius*,
 Since he resents his Friends Wrongs, he'l revenge 'em ;
 I know the Souldiers love him more than Heav'n,
 Me they hate more than Peace ; what this may breed
 If dull security and confidence
 Let him grow up, a Fool may find and laugh at.
 Who waits there ? *Proculus*.

Enter Proculus.

Well, hast thou observ'd
 The growing pow'r and pride of this *Æcius* ?
 He writes to me with terms of Insolence,
 And shortly will rebel, if not prevented ;
 But in my base lew'd Herd of vicious Slaves,
 There's not a man that dares stand up to strike
 At my Command, and kill this rising Traitor.

Proc. The Gods forbid *Cæsar* should thus be serv'd,
 The Earth will swallow him, did you command it !
 But I have study'd a safe sure way,
 How he shall dye and your will ne're suspected.
 A Souldiers waits without, whom he has wrong'd,
 Cashier'd, disgrac'd, and turn'd to beg or starve.
 This fellow for revenge wou'd kill the Devil ;
 Encouragement of Pardon and Reward,
 Which in your name I'll give him instantly,
 Will make him fly more swiftly on the Murder,
 Than longing Lovers to their first appointment.

Emp. Thou art the wisest, watchful, wary Villain,
 And shalt partake the secrets of my soul,
 And ever feel my Favour and my Bounty.
 Tell the poor Souldier he shall be a General,
Æcius once dead.

Proc. Ay, there y'have found the point Sir,
 If he can be so brutish to believe it.

Emp. Oh never fear ! urge it with Confidence.
 What will not flatter'd angry fools believe ?
 Minutes are precious, loose not ore.

Proc. I fly Sir——

[*Exit Proculus.*

Emp.

Emp. What an infected Conscience do I live with,
And what a Beast I'me grown ? when Lust has gain'd
An uncontroll'd Dominion in mans Heart !
Then fears succeed with horror and amazement,
Which rack the wretch and tyrannize by turns.
But hold——

Shall I grow then so poor as to repent ?
Tho' *Æcius*, Mankind, and the Gods forsake me,
I'll never alter and forsake my self.
Can I forget the last discourse he held ?
As if he had intent to make me odious
To my own face, and by a way of terror,
What Vices I was ground in, and almost
Proclaim'd the Souldiers hate against me. Is not
The sacred Name and Dignity of *Cæsar* ?
Were this *Æcius* more than man sufficient
To shake off all his Honesty ? He is dangerous,
Tho' he be good, and tho' a Friend, a fear'd one,
And such I must not sleep by ; as for *Maximus*,
I'll find a time when *Æcius* is dispatcht.
I do believe this *Proculus*, and I thank him ;
'Twas time to look about ; if I must perish,
Yet shall my fears go formost, that's determin'd.

[*Exit Emperour.*]

SCENE III.

Enter Proculus and Pontius.

Proc. Besides this, if you do it, you enjoy
The noble name of *Patrician*, more than that too ;
The Friend of *Cæsar* y'are stil'd. There's nothing
Within the hopes of *Rome*, or present being,
But you may safely say is yours.

Pont. Pray stay Sir.

What has *Æcius* done to be destroy'd ?
At least I would have a Colour.

Proc. You have more.

Nay, all that can be given ; he is a Traitor.
One, any man would strike that were a Subject.

Pont. Is he so foul?

Proc. Yes, a most fearful Traitor.

Pont. A fearful Plague upon thee, for thou ly'st; *[Aside.*
I ever thought the Souldiers would undo him,
With their too much Affection.

Proc. You have it.

They have brought him to Ambition.

Pont. Then he is gone,

Proc. The Emperour, out of a foolish Pity,
Would save him yet.

Pont. Is he so mad?

Proc. He's madder,
Would go to th'Army to him.

Pont. Would he so?

Proc. Yes *Pontius*, but we consider.

Pont. Wisely.

Proc. How else man, that the State lies in it?

Pont. And your Lives?

Proc. And every mans.

Pont. He did me.

[Aretus here.

All the disgrace he could.

Proc. And scurvily.

Pont. Out of a Mischief meerly. Did you mark it?

Proc. Yes, well enough.

Now you have means to quit it;

The Deed done, take his Place.

Pont. Pray let me think on't,
Tis ten to one I do it.

Proc. Do, and be happy——

[Exit Proculus.

Pont. This Emperor is made of nought but mischief,
Sure Murther was his Mother. None to lop
But the main Link he had? Upon my Conscience,
The man is truly honest, and that kills him.
For to live here, and study to be true,
Is all one as to be a Traitor. Why should he dye?
Have they not Slaves and Rascals for their Offerings;
In full abundance, Bawds, more than Beasts for slaughter?
Have they not singing Whores enough, and Knaves besides,
And millions of such Martyrs to sink *Charon*,
But the best Sons of *Rome* must fall too? I will shew him

(Since

(Since he must dye) a way to do it truly.
And tho' he bears me hard, yet shall he know
I'm born to make him bleſs me for a Blow.

[Exit.

SCENE IV.

Enter Phidius, Aretus, and Æcius.

Aret. The Treason is too certain; fly my Lord.
I heard that Villain *Proculus* instruct
The desperate *Pontius* to diſpatch you here,
Here in the Anti-Chamber.

Phid. Curſt Wretches,
Yet you may eſcape to the Camp, we'll hazard with you.

Aret. Loſe not your Life ſo baſely Sir; you are arm'd,
And many when they ſee your Sword, and know why,
Muſt follow your Adventures.

Æcius. Get ye from me.
Is not the Doom of *Cæſar* on this Body?
Do I not bear my laſt hour here now ſent me?
Am I not old *Æcius* ever dying?
You think this Tenderneſs and Love you bring me;
'Tis Treason and the ſtrength of Diſobedience;
And if ye tempt me further ye ſhall feel it.
I ſeek the Camp for ſafety, when my Death,
Ten times more glorious than my Life and laſting,
Bids me be happy. Let Fools fear to dye,
Or he that weds a Woman for his Honour,
Dreaming no other Life to come but Kiſſes.

Æcius is not now to learn to ſuffer;
If ye dare ſhew a juſt affection, kill me,
I ſtay but thoſe that muſt; why do ye weep?
Am I ſo wretched as to deſerve mens Pities?
Go, give your Tears to thoſe that loſe their worths,
Bewail their miſeries: For me, wear Garlands,
Drink Wine, and much. Sing *Pæans* to my Praise,
I am to triumph, Friends, and more than *Cæſar*,
For *Cæſar* fears to dye, I love to dye.

Phid. O my dear Lord!

Æcius. No more, go, go I say,
 Shew me not signs of sorrow, I deserve none.
 Dare any man lament I should dye nobly?
 When I am dead, speak honourably of me;
 That is, preserve my Memory from dying.
 There if you needs must weep your ruin'd Master,
 A Tear or two will seem well; This I charge you,
 (Because ye say ye yet love old *Æcius*.)

See my poor Body burnt, and some to sing
 About my Pile what I have done and suffer'd.
 If *Cæsar* kill not that too: At your Banquets,
 When I am gone, if any chance to number
 The times that have been sad and dangerous;
 Say how I fell, and 'tis sufficient.
 No more I say; he that laments my end,
 By all the Gods, dishonours me; be gone,
 And suddenly and wisely from my Dangers,
 My Death is catching else.

Phid. We fear not dying.

Æcius. Yet fear a wilful Death, the just Gods hate it,
 I need no Company to that, that Children
 Dare do alone, and Slaves are proud to purchase,
 Live till your honesties, as mine has done,
 Make this corrupted Age sick of your Virtues.
 Then dye a Sacrifice, and then you'll know
 The noble use of dying well and *Romans*.

Aret. And must we leave you Sir?

Æcius. We must all dye,
 All leave our selves, it matters not where, when
 Nor how, so we dye well. And can that man that does so,
 Need Lamentation for him? Children weep
 Because they have offended, or for fear;
 Women for want of Will and Anger; is there
 In noble man, that truly feels both Poysets
 Of Life and Death, so much of this weakness,
 To drown a glorious Death in Child and Woman?
 I am asham'd to see you, yet you move me,
 And were it not my Manhood would accuse me,
 For covetous to live, I should weep with you.

Phid. O we shall never see you more!

Æcius.

Æcius. Tis true.

Nor I the Miseries that *Rome* shall suffer,
Which is a Benefit Life cannot reckon;
But what I have been, which is just and faithful;
One that grew old for *Rome*, when *Rome* forgot him,
And for he was an honest man durst dye.
Ye shall have daily with you, could that dye too,
And I return no Traffick of my Travels,
No Annals of old *Æcius*, but he lived.
My Friends, ye had cause to weep, and bitterly;
The common overflows of tender Women
And Children new born; Crying were too little
To shew me then most wretched; if Tears must be,
I should in justice weep 'em, and for you;
You are to live, and yet behold those Slaughters,
The dry and wither'd bones of Death would bleed at.
But sooner than I have time to think what must be,
I fear you'll find what shall be.

If you love me,
Let that word serve for all. Be gone, and leave me;
I have some little practice with my Soul,
And then the sharpest Sword is welcomest — Go,
Pray be gone. Ye have obey'd me living,
Be not for shame now stubborn — So — I thank ye —
And fare you well — A better Fortune guide ye.

Phid. What shall we do to save our best lov'd Master? [*Aside.*]

Aret. I'll to *Affranus*, who with half a Legion
Lies in the old *Subbura*, all will rise
For the brave *Æcius*.

Phid. I'll to *Maximus*,
And lead him hither to prevent this Murder,
Or help in the Revenge, which I'll make sure of.

[*Exit Phidius and Aretus.*]

Æcius. I hear 'em come, who strikes first? I stay for you.

Enter Balbus, Chylax, Lycinius.

Yet will I dye a Souldier, my Sword drawn,
But against none. Why do you fear? Come forward.

Bal. You were a Souldier *Chylax*.

Chy.

Chy. Yes, I muster'd,
But never saw the Enemy.

Lycin. He's arm'd.
By Heav'n I dare not do it.

Æcius. Why do you tremble?
I am to dye. Come ye not from *Cæsar*
To that end? speak.

Balb. We do, and we must kill you.
'Tis *Cæsars* Will.

Chy. I charge you put your Sword up,
That we may do it handsomly.

Æcius. Ha, ha, ha!
My Sword up! handsomely! where were you bred?
You are the merriest Murtherers, my Masters,
I ever met withal. Come forward, Fools.
Why do you stare? Upon my Honour, Bawds,
I will not strike you.

Lycin. I'll not be first.

Balb. Nor I.

Chy. You had best dye quietly. The Emperor
Sees how you bear your self.

Æcius. I would dye, Rascals,
If you would kill me quietly.

Balb. Plague on *Proculus*,
He promis'd to bring a Captain hither,
That has been us'd to kill.

Æcius. I'll call the Guard,
Unless you kill me quickly, and proclaim
What beastly, base, cowardly Companions
The Emperor has trusted with his safety;
Nay, I'll give out you fell on my side, Villains;
Strike home you bawdy Slaves.

Chy. He will kill us,
I markt his hand, he waits but time to reach us;
Now do you offer.

Æcius. If you do mangle me,
And kill me not at two blows, or at three,
Or not so, stagger me, my Senses fail me,
Look to your selves.

Chy. I told ye.

Æcius.

Æcius. Strike me manly,
And take a thousand stroaks.

Balb. Here's *Pontius*.

[*Enter Pontius.*
[*Licinius runs away.*

Pont. Not kill him yet ?

Is this the Love you bear the Emperor ?

Nay, then I see you are Traitors all ; have at ye.

Chy. Oh I am hurt.

Balb. And I am kill'd —

[*Exit Chylax and Balbus.*

Pont. Dye Bawds,

As you have liv'd and flourish't

Æcius. Wretched Fellow,

What hast thou done ?

Pont. Kill'd them that durst not kill,

And you are next.

Æcius. Art thou not *Pontius* ?

Pont. I am the same you cast, *Æcius*,

And in the face of all the Camp disgrac'd.

Æcius. Then so much nobler, as thou art a Soldier,
Shall my death be. Is it revenge provokt thee ?
Or art thou hired to kill me ?

Pont. Both.

Æcius. Then do it.

Pont. Is that all ?

Æcius. Yes.

Pont. Would you not live ?

Æcius. Why should I ?

To thank thee for my Life ?

Pont. Yes, if I spare it.

Æcius. Be not deceiv'd, I was not made to thank
For any Courtesie but killing me,
A fellow of thy Fortune. Do thy Duty.

Pont. Do you not fear me ?

Æcius. No.

Pont. Nor love me for it ?

Æcius. That's as thou dost thy Business.

Pont. When you are dead, your Place is mine, *Æcius*.

Æcius. Now I fear thee,

And not alone thee, *Pontius*, but the Empire.

Pont. Why ? I can govern Sir.

Æcius. I would thou coul'dst,
 And first thy self: Thou canst fight well and bravely,
 Thou canst endure all Dangers, Heats, Colds, Hungers;
 Heav'n's angry Flashes are not suddener,
 Then I have seen thee execute, nor more mortal,
 The winged feet of flying Enemies,
 I have stood and seen thee mow away like Rushes,
 And still kill the Killer: were thy mind
 But half so sweet in Peace as rough in Dangers,
 I dy'd to leave a happy Heir behind me.
 Come strike and be a General——

Pont. Prepare then,
 And for I see your honour cannot lessen;
 And 'twere a shame for me to strike a dead man,
 Fight your short span out.

Æcius. No. Thou know'st I must not;
 I dare net give thee such advantage of me
 As Disobedience.

Pont. Dare you not defend you
 Against your Enemy?

Æcius. Not sent from *Cæsar*?
 I have no power to make such Enemies,
 For as I am condemn'd, my naked Sword
 Stands but a Hatchment by me, only held
 To shew I was a Souldier; had not *Cæsar*
 Chain'd all defence in this Doom. Let him dye,
 Old as I am, and quench'd with Scars and Sorrows,
 Yet would I make this wither'd Arm do wonders,
 And open in an Enemy such wounds,
 Mercy would weep to look on.

Pont. Then have at you,
 And look upon me, and be sure you fear not,
 Remember who you are, and why you live,
 And what I have been to you: Cry not hold,
 Nor think it base injustice I should kill thee.

Æcius. I am prepar'd for all.

Pont. For now *Æcius*,
 Thou shalt behold and find I was no Traitor,
 And as I do it, bless me—Dye as I do——

[*Pontius kills himself.*]

Æcius.

Æcius. Thou hast deceiv'd me *Pontius*, and I thank thee,
By all my Hopes in Heav'n thou art a *Roman*.

Pont. To shew you what you ought to do this is not ;
But noble Sir, you have been jealous of me,
And held me in the Rank of dangerous persons,
And I must dying say it was but justice,
You cast me from my Credit, Yet believe me,
For there is nothing now but truth to save me,
And your forgiveness, tho' you hold me heinous
And of a troubled Spirit that like fire
Turns all to flames it meets with : You mistook me,
If I were Foe to any thing, 'twas ease,
Want of the Souldiers due.—The Enemy.
The nakedness we found at home, and scorn
Children of Peace and pleasures, no regard
Nor comfort for our Scars, nor how we got 'em ;
To rusty time that eats our Bodies up,
And even began to prey upon our hours,
To Wants at home, and more than Wants, Abuses ;
To them that when the Enemy invaded,
Made us their Saints, but now the Sores of *Rome* ;
To silken Flattery, and Pride plain'd over,
Forgetting with what Wind their Fathers sail'd,
And under whose protection their soft pleasures
Grow full and numberless. To this I am Foe,
Not to the State or any point of Duty ;
And let me speak but what a Souldier may,
Truly I ought to be so, yet I err'd,
Because a far more noble Sufferer,
Shew'd me the way to Patience, and I lost it ;
This is the end I dye for, to live basely,
And not the follower of him that bred me,
In full account and Virtue, *Pontius* dares not,
Much less to out-live all that is good, and flatter.

Æcius. I want a Name to give thy Virtue, Souldier,
For only good is far below thee, *Pontius*,
The Gods shall find thee one : Thou hast fashion'd Death
In such an excellent and beauteous manner,
I wonder men can live ! Canst thou speak one word more ?
For thy words are such Harmony, a Soul

Would chuse to fly to Heav'n in.

Pont. A farewell,
Good noble General your hand: Forgive me,
And think whatever was displeasing to you,
Was none of mine, you cannot live.

Æcius. I will not,
Yet one word more.

Pont. Dye nobly, *Rome* farewell,
And *Valentinian* fall.

In joy you have given me a quiet Death,
I would strike more Wounds if I had more Breath

[Dies

Æcius. Is there an hour of goodness beyond this?
Or any man that would outlive such Dying?

Would *Cæsar* double all my Honours on me,
And stick me o're with Favours like a Mistress;
Yet would I grow to this man: I have Lov'd,
But never doated on a Face till now.

Oh Death! Thou art more than Beauty, and thy Pleasures
Beyond Posterity: Come Friends and kill me.

Cæsar be kind and send a thousand Swords,
The more the greater is my fall: why stay you?

Come and I'll kiss your Weapons: fear me not;
By all the Gods I'll honour ye for killing:

Appear, or through the Court and World I'll search ye,
I'll follow ye, and ere I die proclaim ye

The Weeds of *Italy*; the dross of Nature,
Where are ye Villains, Traitors, Slaves—

[Exit.

SCENE V.

Valentinian and the Eunuch discover'd on a Couch.

Emp. Oh let me press these balmy Lips all day,
And bathe my Love-scorch'd Soul in thy moist Kisses:
Now by my Joys thou art all sweet and soft,
And thou shalt be the Altar of my Love,
Upon thy Beauties hourly will I offer,
And pour out Pleasure and blest Sacrifice,
To the dear memory of my *Lucina*,

No

No God, nor Goddess ever was ador'd
 With such Religion, as my Love shall be.
 For in these charming Raptures of my Soul,
 Claspt in thy Arms, I'll waste my self away,
 And rob the ruin'd World of their great Lord,
 While to the Honour of *Lucina's* Name,
 I leave Mankind to mourn the loss for ever.

A SONG.

1.

Kindness hath resistless Charms,
 All besides can weakly move;
 Fiercest Anger it disarms,
 And clips the wings of flying Love.

2.

Beauty does the heart invade,
 Kindness only can persuade;
 It gilds the Lovers servile chain,
 And makes the Slave grow pleas'd and vain.

Enter Æcius with two Swords.

Emp. Ha!

What desperate Mad-man weary of his Being,
 Presumes to press upon my happy Moments?
Æcius? And arm'd? Whence comes this impious Boldness?
 Did not my Will, the Worlds most sacred Law,
 Doom thee to die?

And dar'st thou in Rebellion be alive?
 Is Death more frightful grown than Disobedience?

Æcius. Not for a hated Life condemn'd by you,
 Which in your Service has been still expos'd
 To Pain and Labours, Famine, Slaughter, Fire,
 And all the dreadful Toyls of horrid War!
 Am I thus lowly laid before your feet?
 For what mean Wretch, who has his Duty done,
 Would care to live, when you declare him worthless?
 If I must fall, which your severe Disfavour

Hath made the easier and the nobler Choice,
Yield me not up a wretched Sacrifice
To the poor Spleen of a base Favourite.
Let not vile Instruments destroy the man
Whom once you lov'd : but let your hand bestow
That welcome Death your anger has decreed.

[Lays his Sword at his feet.]

Emp. Go, seek the common Executioner
Old man, thro' vanity and years grown mad,
Or to reprieve thee from the Hangman's stroak,
Go, use thy military Interest
To beg a milder Death among the Guards,
And tempt my kindl'd Wrath no more with folly.

Æcius. Ill-counsell'd thankless Prince, you did indeed
Bestow that Office on a Souldier ;
But in the Army could you hope to find
With all your Bribes a Murderer of *Æcius* ?
Whom they so long have follow'd, known and own'd
Their God in War ? and thy good Genius ever !
Speechless and cold without, upon the Ground
The Souldier lies, whose generous Death will teach
Posterity true Gratitude and Honour.
And press as heavily upon thy Soul,
Lost *Valentinian*, as thy barb'rous Rape.
For which since Heav'n alone must punish thee,
I'll do Heav'n's justice on thy base Assister. [Runs at Lycias.]

Lycias. Save me, my Lord.

Emp. Hold honest *Æcius*, hold.
I was too rash. Oh spare the gentle Boy !
And I'll forgive thee all.

Lycias. Furies and Death.

[Dies.]

Emp. He bleeds ! mourn ye Inhabitants of Heav'n !
For sure my lovely Boy was one of you !
But he is dead, and now ye may rejoyce,
For ye have stol'n him from me, spiteful Powers !
Empire and Life I ever have despis'd,
The vanity of Pride, of Hope and Fear,
In Love alone my Soul found real Joys !
And still ye tyrannize and cross my Love.
Oh that I had a Sword,

[Throws him a Sword.]
To

To drive this raving Fool headlong to Hell.

[Fights.

Æcius. Take your desire, and try if lawless Lust
Can stand against Truth, Honesty and Justice!
I have my Wish. Gods! Give you true Repentance,
And bless you still : beware of *Maximus*.

[*They fight. Acius runs on the Emp. Sword, and falls. Dies.*

Emp. Farewel dull Honesty, which tho' despis'd,
Canst make thy owner run on certain Ruine.
Old *Æcius* ! Where is now thy Name in War?
Thy Interest with so many conquer'd Nations?
The Souldiers Reverence, and the Peoples Love?
Thy mighty Fame and Popularity?
With which thou kept'st me still in certain fear,
Depending on thee for uncertain safety :
Ah what a lamentable Wretch is he,
Who urg'd by Fear or Sloth, yields up his pow'r
To hope protection from his Favourite ?
Wallowing in Ease and Vice ? feels no Contempt,
But wears the empty Name of Prince with scorn ?
And lives a poor lead Pageant to his Slave ?
Such have I been to thee, honest *Æcius* !
Thy pow'r kept me in awe, thy pride in pain,
Till now I liv'd ; but since th'art dead, I'll reign.

Enter Phidius with Maximus.

Phid. Behold my Lord the cruel Emperor,
By whose tyrannick Doom the noble *Æcius*
Was judg'd to die.

Emp. He was so, sawcy Slave !
Struck by this hand, here groveling at my feet
The Traitor lyes ! as thou shalt do bold Villain !
Go to the Furies, carry my Defiance,
And tell 'em, *Cæsar* fears nor Earth nor Hell.

[*Kills him.*

Phid. Stay *Æcius*, and I'll wait thy mightier Ghost.
Oh *Maximus*, thro' the long vault of Death,
I hear thy Wife cry out, revenge me !
Revenge me on the Ravisher ! no more
Aretus comes to aid thee ! oh farewell !

[*Dies.*

Emp. Ha ! what not speak yet ? thou whose wrongs are greatest,
Or

Or do the Horrors that we have been doing,
Amaze thy feeble Soul? If thou art a *Roman*,
Answer the Emperor: *Cæsar* bids thee speak.

Max. A *Roman*? Ha! And *Cæsar* bids thee speak?
Pronounce thy Wrongs, and tell 'em o're in Groans;
But oh the Story is ineffable!

Cæsar's Commands, back'd with the Eloquence
Of all the inspiring Gods, cannot declare it.

Oh Emperor, thou Picture of a Glory!

Thou mangled Figure of a ruin'd Greatness!

Speak, saist thou? Speak the Wrongs of *Maximus*.

Yes, I will speak. Imperial Murderer!

Ravisher! Oh thou royal Villany!

In Purple dipt to give a Gloss to Mischief.

Yet ere thy Death enriches my Revenge,

And swells the Book of Fate, you statelier Mad-man,

Plac'd by the Gods upon a Precipice,

To make thy Fall more dreadful. Why hast thou slain

Thy Friend? thy only Stay for sinking Greatness?

What Frenzy, what blind Fury did possess thee,

To cut off thy right Hand, and fling it from thee?

For such was *Æcius*.

Emp. Yes, and such art thou;

Joynt Traitors to my Empire and my Glory.

Put up thy Sword; be gone for ever, leave me,

Tho' Traitor, yet because I once did wrong thee,

Live like a vagrant Slave. I banish thee.

Max. Hold me you Gods; and judg our Passions rightly,

Lest I should kill him: kill this luxurious Worm,

Ere yet a thought of Danger has awak'd him.

End him even in the midst of night-Debauches,

Mounted upon a *Tripod*, drinking Healths

With shallow Rascals, Pimps, Buffoons and Bawds,

Who with vile Laughter take him in their Arms,

And bear the drunken *Cæsar* to his Bed,

Where to the scandal of all Majesty,

At every gasp he belches Provinces,

Kisses off Fame, and at the Empires ruine,

Enjoys his costly Whore.

Emp. Peace Traitor, or thou dy'st.

Tho'

Tho' pale *Lucina* should direct thy Sword,
I would assault thee if thou offer more.

Max. More? By the immortal Gods I will awake thee;
Ple rouse thee *Cæsar*, if strong Reason can,
If thou hadst ever sence of *Roman* Honour,
Or th' imperial Genius ever warm'd thee.
Why hast thou us'd me thus? for all my Service,
My Toyls, my Frights, my Wounds in horrid War?
Why didst thou tear the only Garland from me,
That could make proud my Conquests? Oh ye Gods!
If there be no such thing as Right or Wrong,
But Force alone must swallow all possession,
Then to what purpose in so long descents
Were *Roman* Laws observ'd or Heav'n obey'd?
If still the Great for Ease or Vice were form'd,
Why did our first Kings toyl? Why was the Plow
Advanc'd to be the Pillar of the State?
Why was the lustful *Tarquin* with his House
Expell'd, but for the Rape of bleeding *Lucrece*?

Emp. I cannot bear thy words. Vext Wretch no more.
He shocks me. Prithee *Maximian* no more.
Reason no more; thou troublest me with Reason.

Max. What servile Rascal, what most abject Slave,
That lick'd the Dust where ere his Master trod,
Bounded not from the Earth upon his feet,
And shook his Chain, that heard of *Brutus* Vengeance?
Who that ere heard the Cause, applauded not
That *Roman*-Spirit, for his great Revenge?
Yet mine is more, and touches me far nearer:
Lucrece was not his Wife as she was mine,
For ever raviht, ever lost *Lucina*.

Emp. Ah name her not! That Name, thy Face, and Reason,
Are the three things on Earth I would avoid:
Let me forget her, Ile forgive thee all,
And give thee half the Empire to be gone.

Max. Thus steel'd with such a Cause, what Soul but mine
Had not upon the instant ended thee?
Sworn in that moment.—*Cæsar* is no more;
And so I had. But I will tell thee Tyrant,
To make thee hate thy Guilt, and curse thy Fears,

Æcius, whom thou hast slain, prevented me;
Æcius, who on this bloody Spot lyes murder'd
 By barb'rous *Cæsar*, watcht my vow'd Revenge,
 And from my Sword preserv'd ungrateful *Cæsar*.

Emp. How then dar'st thou, viewing this great Example,
 With impious Arms assault thy Emperor?

Max. Because I have more Wit than Honesty,
 More of thy self, more Villany than Vertue,
 More Passion, more Revenge, and more Ambition,
 Than foolish Honour, and fantastick Glory.
 What share your Empire? Suffer you to live?
 After the impious Wrongs I have receiv'd,
 Couldst thou thus lull me, thou might'st laugh indeed.

Emp. I am satisfy'd that thou didst ever hate me,
 Thy Wifes Rape therefore was an act of Justice,
 And so far thou hast eas'd my tender Conscience.
 Therefore to hope a Friendship from thee now,
 Were vain to me, as is the Worlds Continuance,
 Where solid pains succeed our senseless joys,
 And short liv'd pleasures fleet like passing Dreams.
Æcius, I mourn thy Fate as much as man
 Can do in my condition, that am going,
 And therefore should be busie with my self:
 Yet to thy memory I will allow
 Some grains of Time, and drop some sorrowing Tears.
 Oh *Æcius*! oh!

Max. Why this is right, my Lord,
 And if these Drops are orient, you will set
 True *Cæsar*, glorious in your going down,
 Tho' all the Journey of your Life was cloudy.
 Aliow at least a Possibility,
 Where Thought is lost, and think there may be Gods,
 An unknown Countrey after you are dead,
 As well as there was one ere you were born.

Emp. I've thought enough, and with that thought resolve
 To mount Imperial from the burning Pile.
 I grieve for *Æcius*! Yes, I mourn him, Gods,
 As if I had met my Father in the dark,
 And striving for the Way had murder'd him.
 Oh such a faithful Friend! that when he knew

I hated him, and had contriv'd his Death,
Yet then he ran his Heart upon my Sword,
And gave a fatal proof of dying Love.

Max. 'Tis now fit time, I've wrought you to my purpose,
Else at my entrance with a brutal Blow,
I'd sell'd you like a Victim for the Altar,
Not warn'd you thus, and arm'd you for your hour,
As if when ere Fate call'd a *Cæsar* home,
The judging Gods lookt down to mark his dying.

Emp. Oh subtil Traitor ! how he dallies with me ?
Think not thou sawcy Counsellor, my Slave,
Tho' at this moment I should feel thy Foot
Upon my Neck, and Sword within my Bowels,
That I would ask a Life from thee. No Villain,
When once the Emperor is at thy Command,
Power, Life and Glory must take leave for ever.
Therefore prepare the utmost of thy malice ;
But to torment thee more, and shew how little
All thy Revenge can do, appears to *Cæsar*.
Would the Gods raise *Lucina* from the Grave,
And fetter thee but while I might enjoy her,
Before thy Face I'd ravish her again.

Max. Hark, hark *Aretus*, and the Legions come.

Emp. Come all, *Aretus*, and the Rebel Legions ;
Let *Æcius* too part from the Gaol of Death,
And run the flying race of Life again.
I'll be the foremost still, and snatch fresh Glory
To my last Gasps, from the contending World ;
Garlands and Crowns too shall attend my Dying ;
Statues and Temples, Altars shall be rais'd
To my great Name, while your more vile Inscriptions
Time rots, and mouldring Clay is all your Portion.

Enter Aretus and Souldiers. They kill the Emperor.

Max. Lead me to Death or Empire, which you please,
For both are equal to a ruin'd man :
But fellow-Souldiers, if you are my Friends,
Bring me to Death, that I may there find peace,
Since Empire is too poor to make amends

For half the Losses I have undergone,
A true Friend and a tender faithful Wife,
The two blest Miracles of humane Life.
Go now and seek new Worlds to add to this,
Search Heav'n for Blessings to enrich the gift,
Bring Power and Pleasure on the wings of Fame,
And heap this Treasure upon *Maximus*,
You'll make a great man not a happy one ;
Sorrows so just as mine must never end,
For my Love ravish'd, and my murder'd Friend.

[*Ex. omnes.*]

Epilogue.

Written by a Person of Quality.

TIS well the Scene is laid remote from hence,
'Twould bring in question else our Author's sence.
Two monstrous things, produc'd for this our Age,
And no where to be seen but on the Stage.
A Woman raviisht, and a Great man wise,
Nay honest too, without the least disguise.
Another Character deserves great blame,
A Cuckold daring to revenge his shame.
Surly, ill-natur'd Roman, wanting wit, }
Angry when all true Englishmen submit, }
Witness the Horns of the well-headed Pit. }
Tell me ye fair ones, pray now tell me, why
For such a fault as this to bid me dye.
Should Husbands thus command, and Wives obey, }
'Twould spoil our Audience for the next new Play, }
Too many wanting who are here to day.
For I suppose if ere that hapned to yee,
'Twas force prevailed, yee said he would undo yee.
Struggling, cried out, but all alas in vain,
Like me yee underwent the killing pain.
Did you not pity me, lament each groan,
When left with the wild Emperor alone?
I know in thought yee kindly bore a part,
Each had her Valentinian in her heart.

F I N I S.